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THE

# INFIDEL FATHER.

VOL. II.

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# INFIDEL FATHER.

## CHAP. XI.

*Rather ſhort; yet long enough to reſtore an injured Lady to her Rights, and to preſent an Epitome of the Virtues of Philoſophy.*

VIRTUE and religion are not only lovely and amiable when ſeen in their genuine forms, but they poſſeſs alſo the incomparable advantage of enduring the minuteſt inſpection, and improving on the cloſeſt familiarity. This, I grant, is no new diſcovery in morals; it is a truth as old

old as the creation: but it cannot be too often repeated.

Lady Caroline did not find her predilection for Mr. Brudenell and Sophia diminifhed at the morning interview. The latter, indeed, appeared with frefh attractions, as the dejection and referve, which were evident in her manner the preceding evening, gradually gave way to the vivacity and franknefs fo congenial with youth and innocence. Lady Caroline perceived that her future protegee poffeffed information, fenfe, and politenefs. She had wit too, though rather of the playful than of the brilliant kind, more defirous to pleafe than to fhine, and too much under the command of mild benignity to purchafe applaufe by the temporary confufion of another. In fhort, her ladyfhip began to be a little doubtful of her own advantage in having *a fuperior* education.

 "Am

"Am I prudent," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "in ſo readily conſenting to have this girl for my conſtant aſſociate? She is too engaging to act as my foil, and ſeems too ſincere to adminiſter a little *adroit* flattery, juſt when I am ſurfeited with the groſs adulation of fools. What a novelty will it be, if my humble couſin ſhould become my mentor! and yet already I feel afraid of ſaying any thing to incur her cenſure."

Time never flies away ſo pleaſantly as when ſpent in an agreeable converſation, in which each individual bears its due ſhare, and the leading perſonage acts only as moderator to the aſſembly. Lady Caroline perceived her own vivacity ſo well balanced by Mr. Brudenell's good ſenſe and Sophia's ſprightly ſweetneſs, that ſhe began to hope they might get through the morning without having recourſe to any of thoſe adventitious

helps, by which that envied race of beings, whom the lower orders consider as highly fortunate in having no employment, ward off that formidable monster ennui. Her Ladyship so much enjoyed her company, that she obeyed Lord Glanville's summons with reluctance, and entered his apartment determined to observe the contrast between his cold mysterious behaviour and Mr. Brudenell's frank benevolence.

Lord Glanville's mind still appeared in a state of restless perturbation, which he visibly strove to disguise under an air of affected ease, something resembling the forced mirth of a hardened criminal who determines to die with spirit. He chose to converse with his daughter on indifferent topics, although his malapropos answers indicated that one important subject engrossed his thoughts. He wished to talk of his guests, but hoped that something would lead the

con-

conversation that way. Lady Caroline saw his design and determined to disappoint it; for though her ladyship was a most passionate admirer of moral fitness, like other great philosophers she had neglected to reduce her theory to practice; or rather, she was so busy in composing a lofty system of virtue, fitted for sublime occasions, that she overlooked the *every-day* duties, and perhaps, like a very eminent moralist of the new school, lowered them to the rank "of square-elbowed, family drudges." Certain it is, that she was too much amused by disappointing her father's menœuvres to make her tell him what he wanted to know but did not choose to ask, to reflect that true benevolence, as well as filial piety, loves "to explore the wish," and to "explain the asking eye."

After amusing the Earl with comments on the daily papers, observations on the

 weather,

weather, and a narrative of the neighbours to whom they owed calls or cards of inquiry, Lady Caroline, ſatisfied with her dutiful attentions, roſe to take leave. Lord Glanville apologized for his forgetfulneſs, and expreſſed a hope that Mr. Brudenell and Miſs Herbert were not fatigued by their long journey. Lady Caroline, quite indignant at her own giddineſs, now recollected Mr. Brudenell's meſſage. The quick changes in Lord Glanville's face proved it to be of ſome importance. "But pray, Lady Caroline," ſaid the Earl,—"I hope this ſame Miſs Herbert is not an uncouth girl?"

"Not in the leaſt," replied the young Lady.

"It would be mortifying," reſumed the polite father, "to have you at your firſt debut aſſociated with a gaunt ſtaring piece of ruſticity, whom, 'as you *cannot ſhake* off, you will be *forced* to patronize."

"Cannot

"Cannot ſhake off! forced to patronize!" repeated Lady Caroline to herſelf with aſtoniſhment; "where can this enigma end? I was told of a companion, an humble friend, whom I might chooſe or reject; and now it proves to be a poſitive appendage from whom I cannot be liberated."

Convinced that the beſt method of gaining complete information was to ſeem perfectly ſatisfied with ignorance, Lady Caroline tripped to the window, humming an Italian ſong, which ſhe interrupted to make the *novel* remark that ſwans look very beautiful on the water, eſpecially when the ſun ſhines. She then with as careleſs an air aſked if Miſs Herbert would go much into public.

"Why yes," replied his Lordſhip, "I think ſhe muſt go into public; her birth and ſituation will require——But pray, Caroline—I know Brudenell is not the

the mere theologian. He poſſeſſes general knowledge, has ſeen a little of life, is not contracted in his notions—not very contracted I mean. I want to know ſomething of his manners. Are they repulſive, ſtern, unforgiving?"

"I can only ſay that he reproved *me* without *my* feeling offended at his freedom. How apt he is to forgive *I* have no cauſe to inquire."

"Nor have I," returned the Earl with great quickneſs; "I thought, perhaps, he might be ſomewhat of a formal Bizarre, and feel piqued by my not ſeeing him immediately. And yet in a matter of importance—there are ſo many preliminaries to adjuſt. I think Caroline you are near four-and-twenty?"

"Next January, my Lord."

"You want but four months of the time when, according to the terms of your grandfather's will, you will be miſtreſs of your maternal fortune. It

was

was a ſhameful will, wrong in many reſpects. I was deprived of all power, and can only hope that your guardians have been faithful ſtewards. Lord Lewſon did not make me one of them, though my generous behaviour to his daughter was well known, notwithſtanding, I will own, ſome ſevere provocations. But peace to the aſhes of the unconſcious dead! I only meant to obſerve, that your fortune cannot be leſs than forty thouſand pounds."

"Excluſive of the Glanville eſtate," obſerved Lady Caroline.

"*That*," replied the Earl, "is at my own diſpoſal; and I would not wiſh you to raiſe your expectations too high. Beſide that our family is remarkable for longevity——"

"Ah," thought Lady Caroline, "now the myſtery is unravelled. A ſtep-mother hangs over my head *in terrorem*. Who can ſhe be? Meliſandriania? or can

can cupid have goaded the amorous graybeard to the very pinnacle of absurdity, and prompted him, grand signior like, to have *distant* beauties brought to him for his approbation? Ah, if vanity has induced Brudenell to sacrifice his grand-daughter, Sophia's ingenuous face tells me that she will scorn the mercenary bait that dotage offers."

These reflections were interrupted by Lord Glanville, who had now so far conquered his emotions as to say, "You had a brother."

"A brother!" cried Lady Caroline with indignation and amazement. "Why have I been kept a stranger from my mother's son?"

"No," replied his Lordship; "he was my issue by a former marriage." The groan which burst from his bosom as he uttered these words proved that Sophia Aubrey's wrongs had been well avenged

avenged by the visitations of the bosom-monitor.

Lady Caroline paced the room in great agitation. To forego the proud consciousness of being the heiress of Glanville's lofty towers was mortifying, even to a person who had not been sufficiently versed in ordinary affairs to know how necessary wealth is to purchase those luxuries which use has rendered necessary. But her mind soon recovered its wonted tone, on recollecting that this disappointment would enable her to call forth her energies, and to imitate the magnanimity of those illustrious women whose lofty contempt of pecuniary motives had been immortalized by the never-wearied pens of French wits and German fabulists.

"Has Caroline Glanville," thought she, "lost any part of her real self? Is she degraded by owing less to adventitious aids? Will she be deprived of real

respect because the eyes of her admirers are exclusively directed to the accomplishments and mental endowments which she possesses? Will her wit be less poignant, her personal charms less attractive, because she is no longer the richest heiress in England? No, I disdain all extrinsic homage. The greatness of my soul shall appear indisputable; and I will thank Fortune for giving me this opportunity to found my glory on the broad basis of innate worth. This unknown brother shall be my idol. Whatever be his character, I will seem to adore him; and the praise that I bestow will be reflected back on my own liberality. Yes! I confess, in circumstances like these, even the cold domestic family virtues acquire an air of heroical greatness. I will bid his Lordship produce his heir. I will tell him that I am impatient to resign my surreptitious claims. I will boast that I feel the divine princi-

ple

ple of immutable justice glowing in my breast, and I will then bid him glory in his daughter."

Besides that fundamental principle which proves the superiority of christianity over its rival psuedo-philosophy, I mean the conviction that the merit of our actions will be finally determined by the secret motives which induced us to perform them, religion possesses many real advantages. Among the rest it may be affirmed, that its faithful votaries are always equal to the exigencies of the moment, and prepared to act as duty requires. Lady Caroline was too much engaged in thinking of the applause that she meant to acquire by her exemplary future conduct to her brother, to recollect the present exigencies of her father, who, overcome by the feelings of self-reproach and shame, added to the humiliation of being compelled to acknow-

ledge his long-concealed offences, had fainted.

As ſoon as Lady Caroline perceived his ſituation, ſhe ran to the door and ſcreamed for help. Her cries brought up Jervais, and he was ſoon followed by Mr. Brudenell.

"Pardon me, Madam," ſaid he, ſtopping Lady Caroline as ſhe was going to quit the chamber. "Let us diſmiſs the ſervant. We ſhall be the Earl's beſt reſtoratives."

"I really can do no good," replied Lady Caroline. "Jervais knows his Lord's ways beſt, and ſuſpended animation always affects my feelings. Indeed, Mr. Brudenell, you muſt allow me to attend to my ſenſations. When his Lordſhip recovers, he ſhall find that I have a ſoul ſuperior to the poor conſiderations of fortune."

Mr.

Mr. Brudenell, finding that he could not detain her, followed her to the anti-room. "May I," ſaid he, "interpret thoſe expreſſions as indicative of your friendly ſentiments for one, who ſeems to ſtep in unſeaſonably to deprive you of what you have eſteemed your hereditary rights?"

"If you mean my brother," returned Lady Caroline, "theſe arms are ready to claſp him to my heart."

"Poor Henry!" ſaid Mr. Brudenell, tears courſing down his venerable cheek. "He would, indeed, have rejoiced to have ſeen this day, to have been welcomed to his father's houſe, and to have found in his ſiſter the moſt generous of women.—Alas! he has long ſince paid the debt of nature, in ſickneſs, ſorrow, and penury,—in a hoſtile country. But his orphan girl ſurvives to claim your goodneſs."

"Ah!"

"Ah!" exclaimed Lady Caroline with eagerneſs, "is ſhe not your Sophia?"

"The child of my daughter and your brother," continued Mr. Brudenell, preſenting Sophia, who had followed him with timid ſteps. "The dear girl claims a fraternal intereſt in your affections, as the ſole repreſentative of her brave *ill-fated* father. O! Lady Caroline, when you know her heart as I know it, you will indeed claſp her to yours."

"My deareſt Sophia," ſaid Lady Caroline, who certainly never looked more amiable than when dreſſed in the tears which guſhed from her eyes at Mr. Brudenell's affecting addreſs, "we muſt begin to love one another with fervour immediately: conſider the years that we have loſt."

Anxious to improve the impulſe of nature into a religious ſentiment, Mr. Brudenell

Brudenell obſerved, that the friendſhips of truly virtuous minds could not be limited by time.

"You both," obſerved he, "appear to look forward to a long ſeries of years; but ſhould any unforeſeen incident terminate your earthly proſpects, eternity will afford you ample ſpace to cultivate and improve the ſocial affections. We know that the next world is a ſtate of bleſſed ſociety; and we are not forbidden to hope that this bleſſing will in part proceed from a reunion with thoſe whom we love."

Lady Caroline wiſhed to condemn Mr. Brudenell for unſeaſonable proſing; but, turning her eyes upon his countenance, ſhe beheld it irradiated by an expreſſion which was the reverſe of dullneſs and melancholy. A ſerene ſmile, a placid brow, lips that ſeemed to utter ſome pious ejaculation, and eyes uplifted towards the region of eternal peace, beſpoke

ſpoke a mind able to meditate on eternity, not only without terror, but with ſublime joy.

Is there a more enviable being in *this* world, than a man who can thus anticipate the next? What true dignity and real greatneſs of character are acquired by frequently reflecting on the audit at which we muſt one day deliver in our tale of intruſted talents! Suſtained by the holy confidence which a well-ſpent life inſpires, Mr. Brudenell calmly advanced to meet the mean, debaſed, yet proud Earl of Glanville; who, poor amid the hoards of ſuperfluous wealth, timid while poſſeſſing plenitude of power, and wretched while ſurrounded by every earthly good, now ſaw the veil torn away by which he had concealed the foul deformity of his cancerous guilt from the world, his idolized reputation blaſted, and himſelf obliged to confeſs, not only with his tongue, but by his actions, the

littleneſs

littleneſs of craft and the imprudence of diſſimulation. The man of the world who has lived to ſee all his projects diſconcerted, all his hopes blaſted, all his arts diſcovered, and himſelf "benetted" in his declining age with the evils that he wiſhed to avoid, will pity this great maſter of deception, while, with affected kindneſs and real averſion, he received his grand-daughter from the hand of Mr. Brudenell. Prepoſſeſſed with a conviction that he was *compelled* to do this act of juſtice, his native haughtineſs had juſt fortified his weak ſpirits with the determination that Sophia ſhould pay dearly for Mr. Brudenell's impertinent reſolution of ſeeing her reſtored to the rights of her anceſtors. But, as he coolly ſtooped to beſtow a faint kiſs on the kneeling girl, her reſemblance to the unfortunate Miſs Aubrey ſtruck him to the heart. Horror and remorſe once more ſubdued the feeble reſolution that

arrogance

arrogance had inſpired. He folded his arms around his revived Sophia, while nature ſpoke in a ſhower of tears. Mr. Brudenell had too juſt an idea of the Earl's character, to commend an emotion of which he perceived he was aſhamed. Affecting to attribute his agitation to indiſpoſition, he ſpoke of Sophia as an admirable nurſe, and ready to ſhare with Lady Caroline in thoſe kind attentions which infirmity always requires. Sophia now attempted to deſcribe her grateful ſenſe of his Lordſhip's tenderneſs, and her hope of deſerving the kind regard that ſhe had already experienced from Lady Caroline; but ſhe was too much affected to ſpeak coherently. Indeed her expreſſions would have been diſregarded. The tone of her voice was too ſimilar to that which Lord Glanville's perfidy had ſilenced in the grave, to allow him to think of any other object than that

which

which overwhelmed him with compunction and deſpair.

As my readers, doubtleſs, wiſh to know the circumſtances which led the way to Miſs Glanville's reſtoration to her family, I will in the next chapter preſent them with ſome of the leading particulars.

## CHAP. XII.

*The Commencement of Miſs Glanville's Hiſtory. Several old Acquaintances are introduced.*

MR. O'FAUGHN's meritorious deeds are, doubtleſs, ſufficiently remembered, to make every one wiſh that they may not paſs unrewarded. During the life of the late Counteſs of Glanville, the friendſhip which ſubſiſted between the Earl and this gentleman could only be compared to the ſtrong attachment of Damon and Pythias, or Niſus and Euryalus. I am not fond of introducing the romantic when I can account for any action by the rules of common life; and I am convinced it is *poſſible* that his Lordſhip's regard might be cemented by the

the diſlike, almoſt amounting to abhorrence, which her Ladyſhip evinced for one whom ſhe generally denominated by the title of "The ſubtle friend." Beſide, conſcious that O'Faughn had much to ſay, my Lord, who diſliked *frank* communication, was willing to pay him well for ſilence.

The wants of a gameſter and debauchee require more than *liberality* to ſupply them. Any thing ſhort of *profuſion* is deemed parſimony by a man void of principle, who knows that he has power to *enforce* obedience to his demands. Mr. O'Faughn became at length ſo importunate as to wear out Lord Glanville's patience; and though grief for the death of his Counteſs furniſhed a good oſtenſible reaſon for leaving England, his real motive was to get rid of a man who could no longer be of any uſe, and who in fact was grown exceſſively troubleſome. Immediately before his

his departure, his Lordſhip incloſed a grant of an annuity of four hundred pounds in a letter to Mr. O'Faughn, replete with friendly ſentiments and expreſſions of regret at this unavoidable ſeparation. But though the noble giver thought this a moſt complete act of juſtice and gratitude, and exulted in the ſucceſs of this conſummate duplicity, the receiver was too well acquainted with the real character that he had to deal with, to be duped by falſe pretences of regret and eſteem. O'Faughn only waited till he had ſpent the money which he raiſed by the ſale of his annuity, to put the Earl's profeſſions to the proof; and, to confeſs the truth, the letter in which he *required* an immediate attention to his preſſing wants had more of the ſpirit of angry demand, than of the gentle pleadings of reciprocal attachment. It was not honoured by a reply. A ſecond, worded in a ſtill more peremptory

ſtyle, ſhared the ſame fate; and the vindictive O'Faughn now determined to have recourſe to different meaſures.

The ceremony of Lord Malvern's marriage to Miſs Aubrey had been performed with the greateſt privacy. O'Faughn was the only witneſs; and ſo fully had Sophia confided in her lord's faith, that it was by accident ſhe even learnt the name of the officiating clergyman. With equal confidence, yet far leſs purity of intention, Malvern had intruſted the whole affair to his tutor's management, who, wiſhing to have a ſtronger hold than gratitude upon his pupil's purſe, took care that the marriage ſhould be legally ſolemnized, and alſo poſſeſſed himſelf of a certificate, properly executed, to hold up over the head of the recreant bridegroom, in caſe he ſhould refuſe his diabolical coadjutor ſuch immunities as he might require.

From the period of Sophia's ſecluſion to the death of the Counteſs of Glanville, O'Faughn found this certificate as ſure a ſource of wealth as the title-deeds of a conſiderable eſtate. He had only to hint qualms of conſcience to poſſeſs any indulgence that his depraved appetite required. Very ſoon after his patron's ſecond marriage, Mr. O'Faughn had ſuch a ſevere fit of penitence, as induced him to travel into Glamorganſhire, with the expreſs deſign of aſcertaining the exiſtence of the former wife. Of this he was ſoon convinced; and ſo far did his love of *juſtice* prevail, as to induce him to write to the Earl of Glanville, and urge him, by many pious motives, to clear his ſoul from the heavy load of Sophia's wrongs: at that time a vacancy in the rich living of O——— was hourly expected; and Lord Glanville anſwered theſe *holy* admonitions, by an

aſſurance

aſſurance that he now looked forward with pleaſure to an opportunity of fixing his *earlieſt* and *deareſt* friend in a ſituation ſo admirably adapted to his talents and character. O'Faughn found his deſire of reforming the morals of an extenſive pariſh prevail over his wiſh of ſnatching *one reprobate* from an adulterous connexion; and he lived upon this promiſe till the incumbent of O——— had *ſucceſsfully* combated what was expected to have proved a mortal diſeaſe. One of the letters that paſſed on this occaſion fell into the hands of Lady Glanville; and the peruſal of it at once confirmed her deteſtation of her lord and his ſage counſellor, and imprinted on her ſoul a full ſenſe of the horrors of her own ſituation. Aware of the evils that muſt attend her daughter's diſputable legitimacy, yet fearful of diſturbing her father's declining age by a full diſcloſure of her deep diſtreſs, ſhe

pursued that method which prudence dictated, to reconcile filial piety and maternal affection, by taking care that the young lady's right to the fortune of her maternal grandfather should be founded on such strong *unequivocal* terms, as would secure her the possession of it, even if some future claimant should step forth, and deny her legal right to the rich inheritance of her father.

O'Faughn's remorse at having been accessary to Lord Glanville's criminal pleasures revived, as soon as he found himself destitute and deserted by his ungrateful patron. True penitence would have pointed his resentment at himself, and taught him that humble contrition which might have procured mercy even for his great offences. But remorse in O'Faughn's mind was only the parent of revenge. He knew that he had the power to torture his adversary; and in

using

ufing that power, he determined not to be foftened by that fellow-feeling which participation in mifery is fuppofed to impart.

On his vifit into Glamorganfhire he had difcovered, that, after ftruggling many years with mental difeafe and bodily indifpofition, Sophia had recovered fuch a portion of reafon, as to enable her to mix a little in fociety. She went by the name of Mrs. Herbert; her appearance and manner excited general attention; but, though curiofity had been greatly excited by the air of myftery in which her ftory was enveloped, fhe ftill remained faithful to the promife that fhe had given to her perjured lord; nor could the moft prying penetration difcover the fource of that interefting melancholy or harmlefs eccentricity which were alternately vifible in her behaviour. Her affecting piety, her prudence, and her delicacy, determined all

who knew her to conclude that ſhe had met with the moſt cruel treatment; and, notwithſtanding the ſuſpicious circumſtances which were attached to her hiſtory, and the aſſurance of the farmer with whom ſhe had been placed by O'Faughn, that ſhe was a fine lady who had been very wicked, the prejudices which theſe repreſentations excited ſoon yielded to the united efforts of candour and compaſſion, and ſhe was generally conſidered as a woman "more ſinned againſt than ſinning."

Her ſon, the legal heir of the proud honours of Glanville, received the beſt education that her limited finances would allow. Deſirous to make him fit for the ſtation which his birth entitled him to claim, and cheriſhing the lively but carefully concealed hope that Lord Glanville would at laſt be juſt to his unoffending child, ſhe willinglv deprived herſelf of every ſuperfluity, to make her

beloved

beloved Henry what his father might not blush to own. In this design she was assisted by the benevolent liberality and elegant erudition of Mr. Brydenell, a dignified clergyman, who regularly spent the summer in Mrs. Herbert's neighbourhood. A tale of woe was sure to attract this gentleman's attention. Sophia's deportment gave to hers a peculiar interest; and, from the age of fourteen, her son found in this good man an instructor, a patron, and I might add a foster-father. At the commencement of the American war the ardent spirit of young Herbert caught the general enthusiasm. He longed to vindicate his country's rights; and he found with pleasure that his mother did not oppose his wish to devote himself to a military life. Her misfortunes had given a romantic turn to her imagination; and she not only wove, in idea, the scarf of triumph for her returning hero, but

alſo anticipated the period when Lord Glanville, proud of his ſon's laurels, ſhould acknowledge him to be worthy of the coronet to which ſhe heard with pleaſure that there was no other heir.

A cockade, and the other appendages of martial pomp, are deemed irreſiſtible in the eyes of the fair. Captain Herbert (for I chooſe to uſe the name by which he was known) wanted not thoſe attractions. A graceful figure, an engaging behaviour, elevated ſentiments, and a frank independent mind, had already given him unbounded influence in the heart of Miſs Brudenell; and during the frequent viſits that he made to his patron, previous to his regiment's being ordered on foreign ſervice, that influence led to a clandeſtine engagement. The young lady was prevailed on to give her hand to her lover, without waiting for her father's conſent, who, though ſenſible of Henry's merits, foreſaw many

evils

evils resulting from this connexion. He was not, however, inexorable. Actuated by the purest benevolence, he forbore from aggravating the miseries into which this rash step had plunged two affectionate and deserving, though *imprudent* young people. He exhorted, pitied, and forgave them. His house afforded them an asylum till duty called his son-in-law to the continent. Mrs. Herbert determined to accompany her husband, and bequeathed her infant daughter to the care of her father. A sacred trust! and it was discharged with that religious care which the situation of the helpless orphan required. Its mother soon found, that her fond imagination had deceived her when it painted a participation in the toils and dangers of her hero in those glowing colours which are derived from poetical enthusiasm acting upon tender love. She discovered that this participation,

cipation, inſtead of relieving, multiplied the ſorrows of ſympathy. She ſhared, indeed, her huſband's dangers, not with the ſoft touches of refined ſentiment, but with the acute anguiſh of torturing ſenſibility; and he felt a new ſentiment of terror repreſs the energies of his ſoul in the hour of combat, at the proſpect of the dreadful calamities in which his beloved Charlotte muſt be involved, in caſe of his death, or the defeat of the royal forces.

The ſufferings of this amiable pair, however, though acute, were not protracted. Mrs. Herbert ſoon fell into a decline, in conſequence of the hardſhips that ſhe endured, and the privation of thoſe comforts which ſhe was accuſtomed to enjoy under her father's roof. Her afflicted huſband did not long ſurvive her. Inſtead of returning loaded with military honours, and crowned with fame, as his fond mother predicted, Mr. Her-

bert

bert periſhed in a diſtant land, under the rigours of ſevere ſervice. Not in the bed of honour, not in one of thoſe ſucceſsful expeditions which may be ſaid to plant the laurel on the grave of the hero who purchaſes glory with life,—but in an enterprize which, though planned by ability, and conducted with gallantry, terminated in diſaſter and defeat. Such is the uncertain eſtate of human affairs! Such are the decrees of that Wiſdom which does not always aſſign "the race to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong!" An unforeſeen contingence warps the expected iſſue, and gives occaſion to ſlander and malevolence to aggravate the poignant feelings of misfortune, by referring events to depravity and folly which ſhould be aſcribed to the intervention of thoſe ſecond cauſes which often blaſt the projects of finite man.

The heart of the unfortunate Sophia, which had been deeply lacerated by for-

mer wounds, was mortally penetrated by the premature death of *that* boy for whoſe ſake ſhe had long *endured* life. Previous to her diſſolution, ſhe ſent for her little grand-daughter, whom ſhe embraced with all the agonizing tranſport of one who claſps the laſt remaining relic of ſome fondly beloved object. She delivered to Mr. Brudenell a written narrative of her unfortunate life, and a piece of needle-work which, with affecting ſimplicity, ſhe called "Poor Harry's cruel father." It was, indeed, an extraordinary performance, by which the lovely maniac in her lucid intervals had barbed the dart that rankled in her breaſt, by executing with her own hair the reſemblance of Lord Glanville's well-remembered features, and decorating the portrait with a border of flowers, as wild and fantaſtic as Ophelia's "coronet weeds."

"I ſhall not," ſaid ſhe with ſhort convulſive ſighs, "tell you his name; for I muſt keep my word now that I am going to poor Harry. My head has been very wrong; but in that paper I have only written what is true. It is of no uſe to complain," continued ſhe, caſting a lingering look on this repreſentation of Lord Glanville. "My hair is changed grey ſince I worked it. Ah, if his heart were but changed too! poor Harry and I might then meet him in the other world."

Similar ſentiments characterized the paper in which the meek ſufferer had recorded the hiſtory of her wrongs. It was a ſimple and affecting narrative, deſtitute of every artful embelliſhment; and oftener lamenting her own credulity, than reprobating the conduct of her enemies. True to her promiſe, the name of her ſeducer was not divulged; but ſeveral circumſtances attending her brother's

brother's death ſo exactly correſponded with the duel between Lord Glanville and Captain Aubrey, that Mr. Brudenell was ſoon led to ſuſpect that that nobleman muſt be the anceſtor of his little charge; and he lamented that the *proofs* were not ſufficiently ſtrong to authoriſe him in making an effort to reſtore his dear Sophia to the rights which ſhe might juſtly claim.

I ſhall ſpeak in another chapter of the principles by which this child's education was directed; and only obſerve in this place, that Mr. Brudenell's fortune was ſufficient to allow it to be conducted on what is called a liberal plan. The cultivation of the heart and temper were chiefly attended to; yet the grace of exterior accompliſhments was not neglected. Sophia Herbert was the idol of the ſmall but reſpectable circle in which ſhe moved, and was early diſtinguiſhed for delicacy, good ſenſe, amiable vivacity,

and

and marked propriety. Her filial affection for her grandfather was generally commended; but the extravagance of panegyric was here checked with an obſervation, that it was impoſſible not to be attached to ſuch a charming old man.

Among the comforts that Providence kindly ſcatters over our earthly pilgrimage, none are ſuperior to thoſe which we derive from ſeeing the young mind on which we have beſtowed our moſt aſſiduous attention expand into the character that we wiſhed to form. Mr. Brudenell was fully ſenſible of his happineſs in this particular. He always looked on Sophia as the germ of immortality; and he carefully watched the progreſs of theſe bloſſoms, which were to bear fruit in the regions of bliſs. Yet, though her eternal intereſts formed the principal part of his ſolicitude, he was not inattentive to her temporal con-

 cerns.

cerns. The refult of his inquiries concerning the private fentiments and character of the Earl of Glanville convinced him, that he was a very improper perfon to be intrufted with the education of any child who was not intended to be polifhed into deiftical indecifion; and, from the beft motives, he determined to refrain from taking any meafures that might ultimately compel him to abandon the inftruction of Sophia, till her principles were fo far fixed, as to prevent any danger of their being corrupted by the fmooth infinuations of infidelity.

Affairs were in this fituation, when O'Faughn, who had traced Sophia Aubrey's lineal defcendant and reprefentative, introduced himfelf to Mr. Brudenell, and offered his affiftance to reftore the young Lady to the rights of her birth. He profeffed to be a fincere friend to the injured wife; but hitherto, from fome unlucky circumftances, too

much

much in the power of Lord Glanville to difcharge the weight that *lay heavy* upon his foul. He fpoke of the neceffities of approaching age; and, after expatiating on his moderate views, declared himfelf willing to leave all to the young lady's gratitude. There is a method of telling a tale that may be called the over-plaufible, and which is certainly calculated to deftroy the effect that it is intended to produce. Mr. Brudenell knew the world; and the very meafures which O'Faughn took to perfuade him that he was a credulous, well-meaning, unfortunate man, convinced this penetrating obferver, that he had to encounter the wiles of a thorough-paced villain. By a feries of judicious inquiries, he led O'Faughn to confefs, that he had been Sophia Aubrey's nuptial father; and he foon difcovered the important fecret, that the officiating clergyman was ftill alive. The unfortunate lady's narra-

tive

tive of her own life ſupplied ſeveral clues, of which O'Faughn was not aware, reſpecting the time when and the place where the ceremony was performed; and Mr. Brudenell, coolly thanking the villain for his proffered ſervices, obſerved, that he already knew enough; as an advertiſement in the newſpapers would bring on a *complete* illuſtration of that myſterious tranſaction, and *compel* Lord Glanville to acknowledge his granddaughter, to whom he knew the greater part of his property muſt deſcend, in conformity to the ſettlement of the hereditary eſtate; ſhe being in fact the only *legal* heir. I would here obſerve, that O'Faughn had formerly amuſed his patron with an aggravated account of Sophia's imminent danger, from a deſign of betraying him into a ſecond marriage, which this conſummate politician did not doubt would tend to confirm his own influence, by involving the unhappy

happy nobleman in a fresh maze of troubles.

The natural feelings of mankind lead us to exult when one notorious villain is duped by a greater proficient in deceit, or when artful iniquity is defeated in its aims by the *steady* wisdom of discerning integrity. Like Alnascher in the Arabian tale, Mr. O'Faughn perceived that he had kicked down the fair edifice of his future prosperity, and that he had nothing to do but to burn the certificate, which he just considered as a draft for unlimited credit, or to accept whatever recompense Mr. Brudenell might think proper to propose. He preferred the latter; and, laying the important paper upon the table, observed, that that document would save any farther trouble, and that he rested with confidence on Mr. Brudenell's justice and honour for his own remuneration.

"I have

"I have hitherto," ſaid that gentleman, "endeavoured to anſwer the demands that have been made upon me; but, as I conceive it to be a part of honour to avoid giving falſe hopes, you muſt allow me, Sir, to obſerve, that this buſineſs muſt undergo a little inveſtigation before I can determine to what your claims *really* amount; and ſhould this affair undergo a diſcuſſion in a court of juſtice, any pecuniary engagements between you and me will wear an iniquitous appearance. In my opinion, your demands ſhould rather be addreſſed to the Earl of Glanville, whoſe ſecret you have for many years faithfully kept, and, to my apprehenſion, only reluctantly and partially diſcovered. I cannot help obſerving alſo, that you could not have the leaſt right *to*, or honeſt intereſt *in*, this certificate. By whatever means you *obtained* it, Lady Malvern's iſſue are the perſons

perſons to whom it moſt juſtly belongs. To the contents of this purſe, Sir, you are perfectly welcome; your expreſſions have led me to conclude that you are labouring under ſome *immediate* diſtreſs; and when a fellow-creature can urge that plea, I do not make a ſevere ſcrutiny into his former conduct."

The claſſical reader may trace a reſemblance between O'Faughn's diſappointment, and that of Ixion, when angry Jupiter ſent the latter a cloud inſtead of the goddeſs whom he preſumptuouſly expected. His preſent neceſſities had ſo far ſubdued his lofty ſpirit, that he readily pocketed Mr. Brudenell's purſe; but, conſidering the preſent rather as an inſult than a favour, he reſigned all his ſullen ſoul to the impulſe of vengeance. He now found himſelf in the ſituation of a fang-drawn lion; and his mortification was complete, when the next poſt brought him a *moſt friendly* letter

letter from the Earl of Glanville, lamenting that, owing to his frequent change of residence, his welcome favours did not arrive in due time; and protesting, that he should always find him most affectionately inclined to fulfil all the claims of friendship, of which truth the inclosed draft for one hundred pounds might be considered as an additional confirmation. His lordship was so tender of his friend's feelings, that he forbore to drop one hint on the subject of extravagance, though he had formerly said *something* on that head; but as I cannot believe that this extraordinary delicacy proceeded from true affection, I must suppose that his lordship thought it the properest way of replying to some very strong paragraphs in O'Faughn's letter; having always observed, that when two people mutually hate and fear each other, the acrimony of one of the parties always produces

duces a ſuperabundant flow "of the milk of human kindneſs" from the other.

If one particle of virtue had exiſted in Mr. O'Faughn's mind, I ſhould requeſt the good-natured reader to feel for his preſent embarraſſments. The labours of a long life of villany fruſtrated, by precipitate petulance, in one ſingle moment. A perſon whom he might at any time intimidate liberated from his power, and himſelf compelled either to ſtarve or to live upon the *ſcanty* alms which Mr. Brudenell had plainly told him he would allow to his diſtreſſes, though he deteſted his conduct. I am conſcious that I ſpend too much time in deſcribing the feelings of this deteſtable being. I will therefore briefly ſtate, that he did not long ſurvive the contempt, obloquy, and inſignificance into which he was now plunged. To a day ſpent in the practice of cool, impaſſioned iniquity, enſued an evening of want,

remorſe,

remorſe, and diſgrace. He ſaw the ſun of life decline, and ſhuddered with apprehenſion at the idea of the awful morning that would ſucceed the dreary night of death.

Very ſimilar were the ſenſations of his partner in iniquity, the proud, injurious Earl of Glanville, when he received Mr. Brudenell's firſt letter, informing him that he was anxious to preſent to him a grand-daughter worthy of his fondeſt affection, whoſe full title to his fortune could be proved by the *cleareſt evidence*. Though very little was ſaid of O'Faughn's agency, the Earl's fears anticipated that fact; and his terror was increaſed by perceiving, from the ſtyle of the letter, that Mr. Brudenell was a man whom it would be *difficult* to *dupe*, and *impoſſible* to *corrupt*.

Being, however, determined to graſp at every ſhadow of hope, his lordſhip, in his anſwer, indicated a polite ſurpriſe

at being addreſſed on the ſubject on which Mr. Brudenell had done him the honour to enter into a correſpondence. He flouriſhed with amazing addreſs on the bleſſing of an unſpotted reputation, and mentioned it as a *fact*, exceedingly well known in the world, that Lady Caroline Glanville was his only legitimate child. He expreſſed full confidence in Mr. Brudenell's honour and veracity; but gently intimated, that characters who were above deception themſelves were moſt eaſily made the tools of artful villains, who carried on their nefarious deſigns againſt the peace of ſociety principally by arming one worthy perſon in oppoſition to another. After hinting that it was not a ſafe amuſement to ſport with the reputation and feelings of a man of eminent rank and unblemiſhed honour, he concluded with the threefold ſubſcription, that he

was Mr. Brudenell's faithful friend, and very devoted and obedient servant.

Mr. Brudenell knew more of European manners than the ambaſſador of Bantâm, and conſequently aſſigned the proper interpretation to this confuſed maſs of intimidation and civility. His anſwer ran in the following ſtyle:

"*To the Earl of* GLANVILLE.

"My Lord,

"When I ſolicited the honour of your lordſhip's correſpondence, I wiſhed not only to perform an act of juſtice to a very amiable young lady; but alſo to exonerate your mind from thoſe painful feelings which muſt ever be incident to the conſcious neglect of a *poſitive* duty.

"I claim no exemption from human errors, and can recollect many inſtances in which my conduct has been influenced by that credulity which you are pleaſed

to

to consider as an inherent part of my character. But former mistakes can have no weight in this particular case, where my opinion is borne out by *stubborn facts*, by such *full*, *clear*, and *decisive* testimony, as any court of justice would approve. Though *I* can have nothing to fear from the event of a trial that cannot affect either *my* character, or *my* fortune, I confess it would be repugnant to my feelings to have recourse to what many may consider as a vindictive measure; and I wish my young charge to owe *every* thing to your lordship's kindness, and *nothing* to your fears.

"The facts which I can *establish* are these. Your lordship, in the autumn of 1752, gave a promise of marriage to a young woman of Oxford named Sophia Aubrey. This promise was fulfilled in London, at her lodgings, on the third of October in that year. A clergyman

man of the church of England named Williams performed the ceremony. He is now living, and ready to atteſt this circumſtance upon oath; and, however reluctant your lordſhip's friend Mr. O'Faughn may be to give *any* teſtimony that may injure *your* intereſts, I can prove that he has acknowledged being preſent, and that he officiated as the nuptial father. This lady ſurvived till the year 1779, and above five years after the date of your marriage with Lord Lewſon's daughter, by whom you had the child whom the world recognizes by the name of Lady Caroline Glanville.

"Previous to your ſeparation from your lawful wife, ſhe bore you a ſon, who was known by the name of Henry Herbert, though he was in fact Lord Viſcount Malvern, and heir of your earldom. Ignorant of his rank (for his

 mother

mother never divulged the melancholy ſecret which ſhe had promiſed *you* to keep), he entered into the army, and periſhed in America, leaving by his wife (my only daughter, who died a few months before him) the child whom I am deſirous of reſtoring to the rights of her birth.

"I am well aware, my lord, that a proſecution of thoſe rights might lead to circumſtances extremely painful to yourſelf, and injurious to the intereſts of the lady who now conſiders herſelf as *ſole* heireſs of your fortunes. As I am purſuing *juſtice*, not *vengeance*, I ſhall be willing to liſten to any reaſonable terms of accommodation. But your lordſhip muſt allow me to hint, that the ſtyle which you thought proper to adopt in your laſt letter is not likely to *expedite* that deſirable event. I will not, however, take advantage of what I con-

I conſider to be the ebullition of ſurprize and reſentment. I will wait for the reſult of a cooler moment, before I purſue any deciſive ſteps; and in the mean time I have the honour to remain

"Your lordſhip's moſt obedient ſervant,

"ANTHONY BRUDENELL."

In his reply, Lord Glanville touched a little upon the pathetic. He lamented that an error, the only deviation from moral rectitude with which his memory could charge him, ſhould be attended with ſuch laſting inconveniencies, as even to threaten his declining age with the moſt grievous calamities. He very feelingly affirmed, that his few hours of repoſe were abridged by Mr. Brudenell's *cruel* letter; and he affected the utmoſt aſtoniſhment at hearing that his connexion with Miſs Aubrey could be ſo diſ-

disguised as even to assume the shape of a legal marriage. He called the Supreme Being to witness that he never had the smallest intention of contracting such an engagement with her; and he avowed his determination to scrutinize Mr. Brudenell's certificates with the utmost care, as soon as he returned to England; being persuaded that he should soon discover the *frauds* which had imposed on that gentleman's unsuspecting credulity. Lord Glanville then proceeded to say, that, as he had directed his conduct by principles,

"Beyond the fix'd and settled rules
"Of vice and virtue in the schools;
"Beyond the letter of the law,
"Which keeps the vulgar mind in awe;"

he was ready to make a handsome provision for the descendant of a very artful woman, whose blandishments had, he acknowledged, seduced him from the

 narrow

narrow path of duty; and he felt more inclined to this act of generosity, as the object of it had received a correct education, and bore a most amiable character. He would, therefore, beg leave to present Mr. Brudenell with ten thousand pounds for the use of his young charge; and, as he had not the least doubt of this offer being accepted, he would immediately write to his solicitor to prepare legal securities. In return for what he knew Mr. Brudenell must think very liberal treatment, he only requested privacy; it being the first wish of his heart to pass through life unnoticed, and to avoid that eclat which generally follows munificent actions.

Mr. Brudenell's reply was short and significant. He observed, that Miss Glanville claimed *justice* from her grandfather; *generosity*, therefore, was out of the question. In regard to any imposi-

tions

tions having been practiſed upon himſelf, the tale that he had heard was too unvarniſhed, and the evidence too *cloſe*, to admit of any evaſion; and he could aſſure Lord Glanville, that it was himſelf who was *deceived* if he ſuppoſed that he had only been united to Miſs Aubrey by a fictitious marriage. "As to the character of that ill-fated lady," continued Mr. Brudenell, "I witneſſed her ſufferings, her meekneſs, her prudence, and her piety, for near twenty years; and I am always inclined to believe, that thoſe who can thus ſuſtain calamity muſt have been guided through life by ſettled principles, totally irreconcileable with your deſcription of Miſs Aubrey's early conduct. But, my lord, *I* am not authorized to require from you that account which you muſt one day give of *your part* in this affair. I only call upon you to do juſtice to her poſterity; and believe me when I tell

tell you, that as soon as you have summoned the virtuous resolution to comply with my demands, you will find your bosom relieved from a weight of insupportable anguish. Your remorse for your early deviations from the path of duty cannot now affect your wife, or your son. They are gone to a state where cruelty never can afflict, nor repentance soothe, the disembodied spirit. Your penitence can only be shewn by your conduct to their living representative, who is also the only surviving relation of Captain Aubrey."

Mr. Brudenell then proceeded to say that though the sum which his lordship had offered was adequate to all Miss Glanville's *present* expectations; still, as it was far beneath her just rights; as it was given rather as matter of favour than in compliance with just claims; and, above all, as it was to be purchased

by

by her consenting to *conceal* her birth, he must steadily refuse every compromise that did not do justice to his countess's memory; and unless the next letter was more satisfactory, he should feel himself compelled to indict his lordship for a criminal breach of the laws of his country.

I will not trouble the reader with more of this detailed account. Suffice it to say, that, hunted out of every evasion, Lord Glanville was forced to send over a written acknowledgement of his marriage to Miss Aubrey, and of the legitimacy of her son, as the only means of deterring Mr. Brudenell from commencing a prosecution. It was, however, agreed that, to preserve him from any attack from the Lewson family on account of his second marriage with Lady Caroline, Miss Glanville's birth should not be *openly* acknowledged, but that she should still be known by the

name of Herbert during his lordſhip's life.

Mr. Brudenell ſincerely rejoiced that he was permitted to retain the guardianſhip of his young charge, as his lordſhip was nowiſe impatient to embrace this addition to his family. It was the wiſh of this pious paſtor to ſtrengthen the mind of Sophia with the pure principles of religion, and to prepare her for the trials which thoſe principles would undergo, when ſhe ſhould remove from the ſafe ſhelter of elegant lettered privacy into the turmoil of the great world. Conſidering her as likely to be aſſailed by the ſhafts of deiſm, or ſeduced by the ſyren ſnares of gay indifference, he inculcated early habits of piety, and built that piety on a clear conception of the tenets on which her faith was founded. But, as Mr. Brudenell's ſyſtem may be beſt explained by detailing the converſation that took place between him and his

his grand-daughter, when her introduction at Glanville caſtle was finally reſolved upon, I will appropriate an entire chapter to this ſubject; premiſing, that my readers muſt prepare themſelves to meet with *old* maxims, rather than *new* ideas, on this faſhionable ſubject of *literary inquiry*.

## CHAP. XIII.

*Mrs. Prudentia throws down the Gauntlet of Controverſy; or, in other words, defends what former Ages conſidered as* moſt *valuable and* moſt *wiſe.*

In conformity with the arrangements that had previouſly taken place between Lord Glanville and Mr. Brudenell, Sophia's introduction to his lordſhip was to be deferred till his return to England; and I cannot remark, that his great impatience to "ſee this riſing honour of his blood" accelerated that event. Indeed, after the earl's return, many circumſtances unhappily occurred to poſtpone what, with more politeneſs than ſincerity, he termed the much-

desired pleasure. Sometimes his house was quite full of common-place company, sometimes he was stretched upon the rack of business, at other times his nerves were unstrung and his mind out of tune.

The time, however, will at length arrive, when every subterfuge must be exhausted; and the amiable Sophia, with fearful anxiety, saw herself on the eve of a most important change, that would probably give a colour to her future life. From the grand-daughter of a dignified clergyman, who had for some years retired from the busy scenes of public life to his parochial residence, she was to consider herself as the heiress of an earldom's wealth; from elegant sufficiency, she was now to habituate herself to unbounded opulence; she was to pass from study, contemplation, and the knowledge of herself, to the eternal bustle of laborious idleness; from the con-

consciousness of duty, confined to a narrow but clearly defined path, to that variety of claims, and those jarring interests, which frequently defeat the "genuine schemes of defective virtue," and shipwreck all the hopes that are not founded on the Rock of Ages.

I must premise, that Sophia had more than completed her twentieth year. She had seen enough of the great world to appreciate its real worth; she was passionately fond of Mr. Brudenell, and devoted to reflection and tranquil amusements. All these observations are intended to qualify my reader's astonishment, when I inform them that she was *terrified* at the prospects which now awaited her. She not only visited with regret her beloved flowers, and every rural walk to which she was attached, but she also dropped a tear at parting with the aged paupers who were her pensioners; and her last visits to the

benevolent

benevolent inſtitutions by which ſhe had improved her native village, were embittered by the ſad reflection that ſhe ſhould never more ſee eyes ſo diſpoſed to welcome her approach with undiſguiſed attachment, or to lament her abſence with ſuch unfeigned ſorrow.

"You have convinced me," ſaid ſhe to Mr. Brudenell on the laſt evening which they ſpent together in the parlour at the rectory, "that Lord Glanville has a claim upon my duty equal to yourſelf; and that I ought to endeavour to adminiſter relief to his tortured mind, and alſo to prepare myſelf for the ſtation which I may one day fill, by acquiring its habits and diſcovering its occupations and duties. I acquieſce, my dear ſir; my reaſon is indeed convinced, but my *heart* is refractory. I fear myſelf when I am removed from your judicious eye. I am perſuaded that I cannot forget Lord Glanville's

ville's cruel conduct. I dread his dark machinations, I detest his hypocrisy. When I do right, you reward me with your smiles; when I err, your frank reproof at once convinces me of my fault and renews my self-confidence. But how shall I interpret the smiles and frowns of a professed dissembler? Lady Caroline too, a wit and a deist, yet engaging even in her errors, frank, lively, and eccentric.—O dear grand-papa! how different must she be from those friends to whom I could open my whole heart! with whom I could be grave or gay, whimsical or serious, without fear of having my designs misconstrued: I might rather say, secure either of passing without *minute* observation, or of confirming *partial* affection. I will not talk of the host of evils that my fears have conjured up; of professed wits without common sense, of foplings refined into insipidity, of boors brutalized into most

*agreeable creatures*, of female dashers loſt to all ſenſe of ſhame, or titled ſwindlers who have forgotten all principles of honeſty. O my beſt friend! what will your poor Sophia do among theſe nondeſcript animals?"

"I ſee," returned Mr. Brudenell, "that your regret at leaving us has induced you to act like a child who dreſſes up a ſpectre and is then terrified at its own fabrication. The beings that you have deſcribed are indeed oftener found in high life than in the lower orders of ſociety. It is their ſphere, their proper place of action; and we ſhould no more wonder at their germinating there, than at finding ſhrews at Billingſgate, or pick-pockets in St. Giles's. But remember, Sophia, the rich ſoil that gives birth to theſe *fungi* alſo brings forth the moſt choice productions. If you are often annoyed by knaves and fools in ermine, you

you will frequently find more poliſhed manners, more enlightened views, and, let me add, ſuperior dignity of character and ſterling worth. For remember, the virtue that can reſiſt the allurements of proſperity belongs to the higher claſs of angelic orders. No object is more grateful to the reflecting mind, than a good man irradiating the ample ſphere of greatneſs. Beware, Sophia, of yielding to the common error of theſe querulous times. It is now the aim of too many popular writers, to feaſt the ſpleen of the lower orders, by exhibiting moſt degrading and falſe pictures of the ſuperior claſſes. Theſe people ſeem to make poverty a paſſport to heaven; but let us remember, that the poor have their duties as well as the rich, the great as well as the ſmall; ſo alſo has the middle ſtation, which we uſed to deem the ſafeſt becauſe expoſed to feweſt temptations. My ſentiments on this

this laſt point, however, have changed, ſince I have of late years perceived that the manners of this very valuable claſs of ſociety have deviated from the charming ſimplicity of ſober conduct, that they affect a falſe poliſh, and imitate *at leaſt* the vices and follies of thoſe higher ranks whom they affect to deſpiſe. So great is the revolution that has taken place in my memory in this portion of my fellow ſubjects, that I am fearful our immediate deſcendants will ſeek for examples of the *modeſt* virtues, œconomy, prudence, perſeverance, temperance, and fortitude among that *great world* of which you have formed ſuch a tremendous idea. Perhaps, too, the manſion of the nobleman may be the laſt reſidence of religion; for how ſeldom do we now hear her voice in the ſabbath-haunts of the merchant, the tradeſman, the opulent manufacturer, or the profeſſional character! Who is there in the

above

above defcription that retains the *ferious piety* which their forefathers found to be not only their beft defence from temptation, but the enviable privilege of mediocrity?

"I do not digrefs, Sophia. I wifh *you* to be reconciled to the rank of life to which you *were born*. I have laboured to reftore you to it, in the hope that you will "be a burning and a fhining light," even in the midft of an evil world. Let your foul rife to the performance of the extenfive duties which your fituation requires. I have a firm perfuafion that you will thus act; for you poffefs one invaluable advantage which the nobility of this kingdom *often* want, you *have been regularly educated as a Chriftian.*

"It is my opinion, that our moft valuable virtues have been much injured by our becoming too fpeculative and refined.

fined. What mother, I mean, what conſcientious mother, of common abilities, who reads one of our finely woven diffuſe ſyſtems of inſtruction, but muſt tremble at the complex office in which ſhe is going to engage, where ſhe firſt takes her little one on her knee, and endeavours to inſtil the elements of knowledge, or the rudiments of principle? Alarmed by a terrific aſſemblage of metaphyſical terms; puzzled by rules for forming *habits* of virtue and preventing adventitious vices or indiſcretions, by removing him out of the reach of impropriety, or by leaving him to ſuffer the natural conſequences of his faults; bewildered by poſitive aſſurances, that obſtinacy may be rendered indelible by *one* inſtance of injudicious oppoſition, that character entirely depends on early combinations, and that the ties of nature are nonentities; ſeverely prohibited from

from enforcing the experience of others, or from directing the infant mind, lest she should inculcate *incurable* prejudices; I think there is reason to fear, that a conscientious mother will shrink from such an awful responsibility, and rather relinquish the instruction of her child, than attempt to learn the abstruse science of *rational* education.

"Blessed be heaven, Sophia, the parental duty is not so *complex!* Let us early bring our young ones to the knowledge of their Redeemer; and the rest of our labours will not only be capable of *clear* definition, but *easy* in practice. I never puzzled you with abstruse inquiries into the nature of truth; but I taught you, that without this quality you could not hope to appear with joy in the presence of its divine Author. I did not build your virtues on a total seclusion from all bad examples; for I know that hu-

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man nature is frail, that the beſt of us tranſgreſs; and I never yet found any *perfect* beings to place around you. You ſaw *my* infirmities; how could I conceal them from my conſtant companion? I did not lay traps for your integrity, by affecting to gloſs over my errors with ſpecious excuſes; but I frankly confeſſed the faults of my nature, and owned that I was finite, ſinful man. I taught you to ſubdue your evil propenſities, not by charging them to the miſtakes of your inſtructors, not by pointing out the *natural* ill-conſequences that would flow from ſuch faults, not by urging the unfavourable opinion which the world would form of your character: I admitted, indeed, *ſome* of theſe conſiderations as ſecondary motives to praiſeworthy exertions; but I founded your moral rectitude on the principle, that no good deed would go without its reward, nor

nor any premeditated, unrepented ſin without its future puniſhment. I told you that there were degrees of glory; and that the more conſpicuous your worth, the brighter would be your diadem. I did not invigorate your paſſions, nor did I attempt to eradicate them; but I ſtrove to render them the allies of religion. By inculcating the doctrine of divine omnipreſence, I gave you a rule of action infinitely more valuable than all that philoſophy ever framed; a rule that will regulate your reflections when you are in your cloſet, that will inſpire you with virtuous ſingularity when a multitude would draw you into evil, that will teach you juſtice to the *meaneſt individual*, and will give you fortitude and confiſtency before the proudeſt earthly tyrant. Shew me any other ſcheme of tuition that can ſupply ſuch an antidote againſt evil, or ſuch a preſervative of innocence.

"Your

"Your views of your fellow-creatures, Sophia, were guided by the ſame admirable ſyſtem; and the experience of paſt ages proves, that it was framed with the deepeſt inſight into our natures. Suppoſing that I could have guarded you from the contact, or rather the *perception* of human infirmity in early life, that I could have ſurrounded you with nothing but what was wiſe and commendable, and convinced you (ah, what contradictious preſumption!) that I was a *perfect mortal*, how could I have fortified your feeling heart againſt the pangs and diſappointments to which a more extenſive view of life and manners muſt have expoſed you? Suppoſe I had taught you, that virtue is the *ſure* road to temporal happineſs, that actions have a natural *invariable* conſequence, that truth *always* prevails, that characters are *uniform*, and that good intentions are *ſure* to produce laudable effects, how would

 your

your faith have been ſtaggered when you firſt met with a worthy perſon in diſtreſs, when you ſaw events ſpringing from cauſes which no human preſcience could foreſee, while the plans of profound wiſdom were fruſtrated by minute trifling occurrences! Should you have been able to command your reſentment when you heard truth overborne by calumny, when you ſaw the good man deviate from his integrity, or when you perceived your originally pure deſigns warped by paſſion, till you *ended* in *error* what you *commenced* in *rectitude?* If I had never told you any thing of the depravity, weakneſs, and final deſtination of man, how could you have reconciled this view of life with the wiſdom, juſtice, and goodneſs of an Almighty Deity?

"I have always told you, my child, that we are heirs of ſin and ſorrow; that we muſt guard againſt the former, and ſubmit to the latter, as the juſt puniſhment

niſhment not only of *natural* frailty, but of *wilful* offence. Do you now regret the tears that I ſuffered you to ſhed over your old nurſe Hannah Willis? I know my neighbours blamed me. You were too young, they ſaid, to be acquainted with grief; a ſick bed was a diſguſting object to a child, and death would *terrify* you. If my tenderneſs could have preſerved you from ſorrow, ſickneſs, and death, I would have kept my darling from contemplating thoſe awful objects in the more remote perſon of a faithful domeſtic. But ſince the next day, nay the next moment, might have deprived you of me, ſince even your own blooming health and tender years were unable to ward off the ſtrokes of diſeaſe or death, I judged it expedient to take the firſt proper opportunity of ſhewing you to what you are born. The deſtroying angel had ſtruck our dwelling; and I refuſed to

 remove

remove the victim that he had ſmitten, from the fear that my Sophia's vivacity ſhould ſuffer a *temporary* interruption. On the contrary, I took that opportunity to initiate you into the practice of the acknowledged duties of humanity. I read you leſſons of forbearance, compaſſion, and reſignation to the divine will, in the example of a ſufferer whom you tenderly loved. I permitted you to ſee death, not in its moſt tremendous form, not in the agonies of the ſeparating moment, nor in the humiliating change which ſometimes precedes our being conſigned to our kindred duſt; but when, recently deſerted of its cœleſtial inhabitant, our clay-built tenement appears an awful but inſtructive ruin; a corrective to vanity, levity, and licentiouſneſs, and an excitement to pious hopes and ſalutary reſtraints. Tell me, Sophia, do you think that I needleſsly exerciſed your feelings? was I to blame

in

in teaching you what you *are*, and what you *muſt* be?"

"No, dear Sir," returned the young lady, who did not once yawn during this long declamation. "I perfectly recollect what I then felt, and am convinced that I have derived infinite advantages from thoſe hopes of immortality which you then infuſed. I felt that I would not, for all the pleaſures the world affords, commit an action the remembrance of which would increaſe the pangs of my laſt moments; and that nothing could be put in competition with the intereſts of that "ſpark of heavenly flame" that can never be extinguiſhed. I have derived the ſame advantage from your counſel in other particulars. Hitherto I have walked ſafely; but is it not becauſe I have been hitherto guided and upheld by you?"

"My beſt Sophia," anſwered Mr. Brudenell, concealing the grateful tear

 which

which ſtarted into his eye, " remember this as one of my counſels,—perform with cheerfulneſs the duties which are required of you. Had I conſulted my own inclinations, I ſhould have kept you *cloſe* by my ſide, and enjoyed your ſweet ſociety till the laſt moment of my exiſtence. But could I have *juſtly* done this, when I found that you were born to a widely-extended ſphere of general uſefulneſs? I had formed you to the practice of piety, benevolence, and integrity; to whom ſhould we wiſh the Glanville fortune to deſcend, but to a perſon thus inſtructed, and that perſon alſo the lawful heireſs?

" I muſt indulge the viſions which my fond partiality ſuggeſts. How many thouſands will bleſs the day that puts you in poſſeſſion of the rights of your anceſtors. Do not ſuffer your own ſpirits to be depreſſed by an apprehenſion that your trials will exceed your

*powers*

*powers* of resistance. Doing an act of justice to yourself, and vindicating the memory of your father and grandmother, cannot be called throwing yourself in the way of temptation. By claiming your birthright, you fulfil one of the first principles of nature; by neglecting to do it, you would, in my opinion, omit a positive duty. Do not, therefore, speculate on distant contingencies, or remote possibilities. Your path is plain before you; and while you continue to act as you ought, you are encouraged to hope for divine assistance.

"We do not choose our progenitors, my love; and it would be ungrateful in us to quarrel with those whom Providence has given us. The command to honour our parents is positive; and though you cannot feel love or esteem for Lord Glanville, you may afford him duty. Whatever provocations he may have given you, they cannot be greater

 than

than the power of Chriſtian forgiveneſs. However enormous may be his offences againſt divine and human laws, *you* are not called to execute juſtice on the culprit. His preſent ſituation claims your pity; for he is now wretched, and by his miſeries affords an awful inſtance of thoſe viſible acts of divine government by which the Author of Nature ſhows that he ſtill reigns over thoſe refractory rebels who try to diſprove his ſupremacy. Your grandfather has gone on and proſpered in his wickedneſs; no phyſical evils, no ſudden concuſſion of the elements, no excruciating bodily pains have fallen upon him. His fortunes have not been ſhaken by political changes; he has eſcaped from the tribunal of earthly juſtice, and has reached the period of declining life with "all his honours blooming on his head." Yet Lord Glanville is wretched, wretched through the natural ſecret conſequences of his crimes. He feels the gnawings of

of never-ceaſing though concealed re-morſe, and the loud acclamations of awakened conſcience. He trembles at that unknown futurity which he has pretended to deny. He has exhauſted the cup of tranſitory pleaſure, yet he wiſhes to remain ſipping the bitter dregs of joyleſs life, being conſcious that he has rejected the cordial of immortality. I conceive, my dear child, that I cannot ſupply you with a ſtronger incentive to hold faſt the precepts of piety and integrity, than by placing before you ſuch an example as Lord Glanville's. His ſmothered anguiſh will excite your livelieſt commiſeration; for can there be, in all the number of indigent creatures whom your purſe may relieve in future, ſo calamitous a being as an aged infirm infidel, who ſees an unfathomable gulph beneath him, while the tottering pinnacle on which he ſtands crumbles every

 moment

moment from beneath his trembling feet?"

Sophia burst into tears at this affecting portrait, and promised to remember Mr. Brudenell's injunctions, by administering to Lord Glanville all the consolation that his melancholy situation required. She acknowledged that his present state of mind must operate as a powerful antidote against the seductions of infidelity: "But," added she, "are not my principles in greater danger from the lively sarcasms and insinuating manners of Lady Caroline?"

"I should have dreaded her example extremely," resumed Mr. Brudenell, "if you had removed into that family before your principles had been sufficiently fixed, and your mind strengthened by having experienced the peaceful tranquillity, as well as the *reasonableness*, of a religious course of

of life. Had you been educated in the ſchools of bigotry and fanaticiſm, had you been taught to place piety in rigid auſterity, phariſaical pride, or moroſe ſuperſtition, or had you mixed the genuine doctrines of religion with the artful interpolations of deſigning men, and blended the ſervice of the Deity with the idolatrous worſhip of a ſeraphim, I might have feared the effects of thoſe engaging but perverted talents; which, while expoſing what is obviouſly wrong, will not with decent reverence abſtain from caſting oblique cenſure on what is right.

"Apply the principles which I taught you, my deareſt Sophia, in this inſtance, and all will be well. You are not called upon to deny Lady Caroline the juſt meed of praiſe for thoſe valuable qualities which ſhe *really* poſſeſſes. As nothing human can be quite perfect (for then it would become angelic); ſo, again

again, man never is ſo depraved as to loſe all traits of original purity, (for then he would become a devil). We are taught to "render unto Cæſar whatever is Cæſar's." Give Lady Caroline all the praiſe that her agreeable talents merit; but remember, that the inferior order of graces muſt not arrogate an aſcendancy over the ſacred hierarchy of virtues. Lady Caroline purſues tranſitory and temporal objects; your views are more diſtant and more exalted. Give her the *eclat* that ſhe requires, allow her the limited portion of exiſtence to which her views are confined; but beware how you ſacrifice your eternal inheritance to that laugh which, however diſtinguiſhed by wit, information, and fancy, muſt, when directed againſt the venerable form of religion, be eſteemed the "laugh of fools."

Sophia

Sophia here interrupted Mr. Brudenell, by expreffing her fears that the circumftances under which fhe muft be introduced at Glanville-caftle would preclude all hope of her being able to conciliate Lady Caroline's good opinion.

"Perhaps not," faid he. "The new fchool of morals is a great admirer of fpecious virtues and *outré* great actions, and continually recommends liberality, generofity, and a total difregard of pecuniary motives. Befide, though it would be wrong to truft to the holiday quality of convenience, we need not affirm that the fophifticating fpirit of deifm is always fo active as totally to pervert natural qualities. Be prudent, my love; do not provoke hoftility; remember that Lady Caroline has caufe to confider you as an intruder. But if her character be *juftly* reprefented to me, fhe is lefs difpofed to value the gifts of fortune, than the perfonal appendages of

of beauty, wit, and mental attainments. I know, Sophia, that you will not court *admiration*, and that if you think Lady Caroline amiable, you will rather rejoice at, than envy her triumphs. Confidering the manner of her education, and her fituation in life, it is highly probable that fhe has acquired fome fingularities. If they be innocent, feem to be pleafed with them; or at leaft do not exafperate her by a marked oppofition. Your habits are fo widely different, that your fphere of action need not interfere with hers. Do you take the *duties*, and leave to her the *vanities* of an exalted ftation: you will divide its pleafures between you; fhe will take that portion which depends upon the *opinion* of others, and you will be poffeffed of what refults from *felf-fatisfaction*. She will never envy you the commendation of being very good; and do you fuffer her to take the lead in tafte, fprightlinefs

nefs, and all thofe ſhining qualities which make up what is called *ton.* Oppofe nothing but what is imprudent or criminal; and there let your oppofition be *mild*, but firm and regular. Convince her that you are neither a hypocrite nor a bigot, that you cannot temporize, and will not be mifled. Reprove her follies with the filent eloquence of regular goodnefs; and I have hopes, yes, Sophia, I have more than hopes, I have a joyful confidence, not only that your own virtue will come out like pure gold from the affayer's furnace, but that your example will have a bleffed effect on the mind of a young lady who only wants better principles to be truly amiable. I am fometimes enthufiaftic enough to believe, that Lord Glanville's horrors may be abated by your dutiful attentions; and that if his life be fpared long enough to afford time for conviction, he may renounce his

his prejudices againſt a religion that teaches us to return good for evil, and ſupplies uniform rules of conduct adapted to every ſituation in life."

I ſhall not apologize for giving Mr. Brudenell's converſation at full length. It is impoſſible for me to ſteer entirely clear of egotiſm; and this gentleman's ſentiments are ſo exactly like my own, that while I tranſcribe them, I feel the ſame ſatisfaction as when I am indulging in my favourite habit of digreſſion. My readers, therefore, had better prepare themſelves for a little more like the above ſpecimen, in the courſe of this work; and I ſeriouſly interdict all ladies who are paſt the age of eighteen, from uſing the privilege of ſkipping, either Mr. Brudenell's dialogues, or my digreſſions. I here aſſure them, that they were not added in conſequence of a remonſtrance from my bookſeller, that my manuſcript was too ſcanty; but that they

they are, in fact, the *original* ſtamina of my work, without which my labours would loſe all their intrinſic value, and be as much inferior to the tales of Mother Gooſe, as I rank below her in the *intricacy* of my plots, or the uſe of *wonderful expedients.*

## CHAP. XIV.

*The Commencement of a reciprocal Attachment. A Lover ſhews great Inſight into his Miſtreſs's Character.*

We have ſeen Sophia reluctantly received by Lord Glanville, and welcomed by Lady Caroline with enthuſiaſtic generoſity. The former ſtruggled hard to preſerve the antipathy which he was determined to entertain againſt thoſe whom he conſidered as intruders into his family, and diſturbers of his repoſe. But notwithſtanding the peculiar penetration with which this nobleman was endowed, he found it very difficult to diſcover any ſtrong proofs of the arrogance of the lordly prieſt, or of the importunate

portunate pertinacity of the officious bigot; yet, being convinced that these qualities must form the outline of Mr. Brudenell's character, he gave him credit for extraordinary prudence, and was almost tempted to admire a man whom he believed to be a greater adept in dissimulation than himself. I must, however, vindicate Lord Glanville's reputation from a charge which only his *extreme modesty* could have suggested; for certainly the poles were not wider asunder than the heart and the countenance of this nobleman. Though it was a general rule with his intimates to interpret his assurances of esteem and regard by their direct *contraries*, even this clue often failed to disclose the intricacies of Lord Glanville's heart. I do not suppose that he had ever read the wise king of Israel's remark, that "soft words turn away wrath;" but it was a rule with his lordship to give soft

ſoft words to all, except thoſe who were ſo wholly in his power that their wrath could not affect him. Not conſidering Mr. Brudenell in this humiliating point of view, he ſhaped his behaviour by the moſt exact rules of courtly civility; and ſometimes he felicitated himſelf on the conviction that he really had eraſed all remembrance of paſt injuries, and perſuaded the old parſon that he was a perfectly *correct*, or at leaſt a perfectly *reformed* character.

With reſpect to Sophia, much againſt his own inclinations ſhe daily acquired more importance in his eyes. He contraſted her active ſervices, her uniform ſweetneſs, her unaffected wiſh to pleaſe, manifeſted not on extraordinary occaſions, but daily and hourly, with his ſelf-engroſſed, ſelf-willed, though at times enchanting daughter. He would not allow that Sophia's ſuperior conduct proceeded from a better ſyſtem of education

education than his own; he only thought that Brudenell had met with a a more ductile pupil, or else that Lady Caroline's mind in some degree differed from that mass of subtilized matter which constitutes our intellectual part, by imbibing particles more tenacious than *yielding* wax, susceptible of every impression. In these conclusions he was, indeed, unjust both to his own abilities as a teacher, and to the retentive qualities of his disciple. He had taught her obstinacy, which he called fortitude; selfishness, which he dignified by the name of self-esteem; and a lofty disregard for the opinions, interests, and convenience of others, which in his vocabulary was the proper distinction of a free independent being. Lady Caroline's character most exactly tallied with this outline; there was, indeed, on the tutor's part one little mistake, in his omitting to specify that the effect of his precepts

cepts was not to appear in her behaviour to himſelf.

A man ſo ſteeped in guilt as was Lord Glanville muſt never hope to enjoy one unembittered pleaſure. When Sophia, with the ſmile of compaſſionate ſweetneſs, preſented him his compoſing draught, and in terms of gentle benevolence wiſhed him a good-night, her reſemblance of that injured innocent whom his guilt had conſigned to a premature grave prevented him from enjoying the balmy bleſſing. His ſolitude was diſturbed by the moſt painful reveries; and, though his cold affections were ſometimes ſo far ſtimulated as to make him regard his grand-daughter in the light of a beneficent ſpirit, his fancy, inſtead of anticipating future happy years endeared by her mild attentions, ſadly wandered to the irremediable paſt, and painted the bleſſings that he might have enjoyed had he acted uprightly. Theſe

reflections continued till the potency of the opiate overpowered weary nature; imagination then, released from the curb of reason, recalled some of those forms which had withered into shapeless dust beneath the pressure of his neglect, his perfidy, or his revenge. Sometimes poor Aubrey stood before him, with that soul-harrowing look which he gave him on receiving the murderous bullet in his bosom. Sometimes he saw the well-remembered cherubic countenance of his son, who now appeared struggling with all the calamities that attend a deserted orphan. But a still more dreadful vision often appeared. It was his injured wife in the moment of frenzy; her arms bound, lest they should injure her own person, her hair wildly dishevelled, and her eyes bereft of all their soft intelligence; yet, even in madness, retaining her habits of piety and fidelity, and imploring every beholder to

to pray for poor Harry's cruel father. Which-ever of the above viſions employed the night, Lord Glanville awoke agitated and unrefreſhed; ſometimes regretting that he yet lived; ſometimes fearing that dreams *might* "diſturb the grave." Thus, without any bodily diſeaſe, his mind's malady gradually reduced his ſtrength; and, though he felt himſelf haſtening to the land where all things are forgotten, he could only read pity and ſorrow in the countenances of a ſtranger whom he had attempted to deceive, and a near relation whom he had treated with baſeneſs: while his daughter, whom he really loved, ſhe who ought to be his ſolace in every ſorrow, like the prieſt and the Levite in the pathetic parable of the good Samaritan, "looked at his diſtreſs, and paſſed by on the other ſide."

It is poſſible, however, that the ſilent attractions of Sophia's virtues would have

have made Lady Caroline a convert, if not to the pleafures at leaft to the *propriety* of filial duty, if a powerful paffion had not, forbidden her feeling any commiferation for her unhappy father. From what I have already faid refpecting Mr. Raymond, it may be gueffed that her ladyfhip was by no means indifferent to the attractions of that gentleman. Now, though, in fact thofe attractions were not very numerous nor very brilliant, they acquired an adventitious importance from an extraordinary circumftance. Sir John Randolph, at whofe houfe this all-conquering hero once intended to pafs the fummer, fuddenly altered his behaviour to his inmate; and, though Mr. Raymond had previoufly declared that he felt himfelf perfectly comfortable, that the air agreed with his health and fpirits, that Sir John's table was *almoft* as well fupplied with wines and eatables as a Paris hotel, and

 that

that the neighbouring families were above the usual class of country company, he as suddenly changed his tone, and acknowledged himself to be so confoundedly bored by *detestable twaddles*, that he must post to town immediately. Doubtless, Lady Caroline Glanville was an exception to the above severe censure; for he judged it expedient to communicate to her a statement of the true motives that had expedited his departure from Randolph-hall. He declared, that the feelings of a gentleman would no longer permit him to overlook the striking incivility of his host; and, as this change took place on the very day that Lord Glanville had paid a morning visit, there was but too much ground to suppose that his lordship had been accessary to the alteration. Conscious of rectitude, Mr. Raymond declared, that he felt a noble disdain of the malice of his enemies, and consoled himself

himſelf with knowing that Sir John Randolph was the only gentleman in England who would not preſs his company for an indefinite period, and that Lord Glanville was the only nobleman who would have recourſe to mean artifice to remove an object whom he viewed with as contemptible jealouſy. His reſentments on this occaſion were ſo warm, that he ſometimes felt tempted to take very active meaſures; but the radiant image of a Minerva interpoſed, and caſt her impenetrable ſhield over the head of the offending tyrant. Unable to withdraw his attentions from a ſpot where he had been ſo often bleſſed with the communication of what he gloried to call *reciprocal* ſentiments; incapable of diſguiſe, eſpecially when he addreſſed a lady whoſe penetration would inſtantly detect every ſubterfuge, he would unboſom his inmoſt ſoul to the only being

 whom

whom he had ever found capable of genuine greatneſs and elevation of mind. Though his preſence was immediately required in London, on buſineſs of the utmoſt importance to himſelf and his intimate friend Lord Phantome, he had determined to ſtop a few days at W——, to know whether it was at Lady Caroline's requeſt that Lord Glanville had interfered with his conduct. He acknowledged that her ladyſhip had a right to direct him; for he was ready to give his ſoul into her hands, to be modelled as ſhe thought fit; and he ſhould eſteem himſelf the happieſt of human beings if ſhe would deign to point out how he might prove his profound devotion to *her* will. But as to any other influence he was invincible; and he conjured her to remember, that, though Hercules ſpun at the bidding of Omphale, ſtill he was the Hercules who

tore

tore the Nemean lion, and extinguiſhed the vital ſpark of the worthleſs Antæus. In fine, though wit, ſenſe, information, and beauty, had *power* to make him a paſſive captive, impertinence would trace in him the ſoul of a demigod.

I am afraid that ſome of my readers will find it difficult to underſtand Mr. Raymond's letter; but it is ſufficient that the lady to whom it was addreſſed found it not only a perſpicuous but an inimitable compoſition. Her father's viſit to the Randolphs, made at ſuch a peculiar criſis, and with profound ſecreſy too, excited her warmeſt indignation againſt all that hoſt of circuitous precautions which courtiers dignify by the name of policy. Now, as the principles of natural juſtice require that the puniſhment of the offender ſhould immediately follow the detection of his offence, Lady Caroline determined to con-

vince her father that he had no right to impede her natural liberty; but that ſhe would chooſe her own ſociety, and act without the ſmalleſt regard to his controul, and in open defiance of his ſtratagems.

In executing this ſcheme, prudence never interpoſed to ſuggeſt that it was poſſible that the means to which ſhe had recourſe to torment her father might *eventually* embarraſs herſelf; nor did candour hint the poſſibility that Lord Glanville might not be the cauſe of Sir John Randolph's inhoſpitality, as the worthy baronet, previous to the earl's call had ſhewn ſymptoms of being weary of a gueſt whom he had invited for a few days, but whoſe arrival was followed by two formidable portmanteaus, and an immenſe travelling trunk, enough to intimidate any one who was not diſpoſed to give up his houſe to a ſix months' reſidence. I believe that candour and prudence are among the virtues received into

into the new ſchool; but on the preſent occaſion, having nothing better than expedience to ſuggeſt, it was impoſſible for them to reſtrain the uproar of the paſſions; which being kept in no ſort of controul by the ſuggeſtions of duty, candour determined that a father was very fair game, and that it was lawful to hunt him down; and prudence ſaw no reaſon why a perſon might not ſtop ſhort on the edge of a precipice, as ſoon as there was no reaſon for proceeding further.

Lady Caroline's anſwer to Mr. Raymond expreſſed a pointed cenſure of Lord Glanville's behaviour; and, after waving all pretenſions to the character of Minerva, which was at leaſt *modeſt*, ſhe expreſſed ſuch ſatisfaction in Mr. Raymond's ſociety, as was indeed not quite conſiſtent with the attributes of that goddeſs. She denied having any right to direct that gentleman's conduct,

 yet

yet declared herself pleased with the deference that he paid to her judgment; and, by expressing an anxiety for his welfare, she opened the door to a clandestine correspondence, and laid the foundation of future misery.

After she had finished her letter, it occurred to Lady Caroline that it was replete with sprightly turns and elegant allusions, which deserved commendation; and, as she very much wished to impress Sophia with an idea of her exalted talents, she was inclined to show it, and demand her plaudits. She had almost reached the dressing-room with this design, when she recollected that Sophia was a very odd girl, had seen little of life, and might probably be so scrupulous as to object to a private intercourse with an elegant, interesting young man. Mr. Raymond's situation next presented itself to her recollection, and she

ſhe felt a deeper ſcarlet tinge her cheek when ſhe reflected, that the only anſwer ſhe could give to any inquiries after what he was, would be, that he was a perſon of dependent, or rather deſperate fortune. She now conſidered the Italian princes, German counts, and French marquiſes, whom ſhe had ſucceſſively rejected; and ſhe feared that the advantages which Mr. Raymond poſſeſſed over thoſe ſlighted ſwains, if ſeriouſly inveſtigated, muſt be reduced to this one propoſition, that Lord Glanville never had expreſſed ſuch a *decided diſlike* on any former occaſion.

Conſcious that Sophia's principles and motives of action were not only extraordinary but deeply rooted, and unwilling to forfeit her approbation, Lady Caroline ſpared her new friend the diſtreſs of improper confidence, and diſpatched her billet to Raymond through the inter-

 vention

vention of Mrs. Chenille, who being an adept in her profeſſion, did not fail to take advantage of a wet wafer to make herſelf perfectly miſtreſs of its contents; which with punctual exactneſs ſhe committed to paper to uſe as occaſion might ſerve, either as the coadjutrix of her lady, or of Lord Glanville.

Affairs were exactly in this ſtate at the caſtle, when Lady Fitz John, ſmitten by that irreſiſtible paſſion for the *extraordinary* which now unſettles ſo many female heads, determined to give a fête. Her motives for this magnificent undertaking were not ſingular. Sir Peter had aſſured her that he muſt be announced in the gazette in a few months; and, as butchers and bakers have ſometimes a very keen ſcent upon ſuch occaſions, it would be proper to convince *them*, and indeed the whole vicinity of W———, that the Fitz Johns were any thing rather than bankrupts; and as to the expence of

of the businefs, it was intended to be conducted on the fmart, rather than on the fubftantial fcale, difplaying great tafte, extenfive erudition, and elegant œconomy.

There was befide another reafon: Lord Glanville feemed to want a little ftimulation; and there could be no harm in fhewing him, that the fair Melifandriania had very numerous and genteel connections. His fallow complexion and profound dejection certainly proved him to be abfolutely "over boots in love;" but on the verge of feventy no time is to be loft. The irrefolution and imbecility of age may blunt the blind archer's darts; and it is prudent to call in the accelerating aid of jealoufy, left, as has fometimes happened, Death fhould ftep in and difpute with Hymen for the antiquated victim. Lady Fitz-John had the happy profpect of being

being able to ſhow ſomething like a rival; for Mr. Artremidorus had engaged Sir Brouze Harpy to ſpend a week at FitzJohn Place, in their return from Brighton; and though beauty, even when magnified by an opera-glaſs, never darted one ray ſufficiently bright to penetrate the cloudy meridian of Sir Brouze's underſtanding, he was in faſhion, dreſſed in the beſt ſtyle of ſlovenlineſs, and certainly did *look* like a divine engaging fellow.

Being ſometimes vain enough to hope that my lucubrations may ſurvive the manners I deſcribe, I think it neceſſary to ſtate, for the information of the next generation, that at the opening of the nineteenth century, a *divine engaging fellow* meant a kind of compound of the monkey and the bear: by uniting the grimaces and miſchievouſneſs of the former, with the torpid inſenſibility and churliſh

churlish selfishness of the latter, you might (provided you could boast a natural stock of impudence) produce a *dear agreeable creature*: that is, a something who cared for nobody, and was good for nothing; who could stare modesty out of countenance, affront sensibility, outrage politeness, and do the rudest things with the most unembarrassed air. Sir Brouze, it is true, was very apt to get tipsy; but, if he could only be kept sober, Lady FitzJohn considered that he would be a great ornament to her fête, and effectually alarm the earl; especially if Melisandriania would but allow him to rally her on her likeness to his favourite pointer, listen to his anecdotes of the turf, and perform Diana to his Acteon, by whispering or romping with him in an easy stylish way.

Very splendid preparations were made at FitzJohn-Place for this gala; and

innumerable were the contrivances by which ignorance and vanity ſought to cover their bald pretenſions to taſte and elegance. The preſiding genius, being determined that it ſhould be quite *ton*, requeſted Mr. Pliant to furbiſh up all his claſſical learning, and give every thing a *Greek* air. At his ſuggeſtion, ſhe iſſued her invitation for an *Elyſian petit ſoupé*; and her garden, conſiſting of a rood and a half of ground, was fixed upon for the ſcene of the firſt act. A Chineſe ſummer-houſe was new-named the palace of Pluto; and even the duck-pond underwent a transformation, for it was called Lethe, and furniſhed with a boat, which ſo far reſembled Charon's that it only admitted one paſſenger at a time. Pliant himſelf was to officiate as ferryman, dreſſed in a fur-cap and a waterman's jacket; and Mr. Congée, the dancing-maſter, volunteered his ſervices; obſerving, that if he

and

and his attendant-ſcraper ſtood on the oppoſite bank, in an *ilegant peſſition*, playing upon their kits, they might be miſunderſtood for *Orphas* and *Amphon*, Sir Peter intreated that he might be excuſed from making his appearance; he urged that he had no ſpirits, and knew not how to ſupport *any* character with propriety. His lady was peremptory in her commands, and he had no other alternative than to *abſcond*; which ſtep, in the preſent ſituation of his affairs, he rightly judged would give rather too much *celebrity* to his entertainment.

I queſtion whether Democritus ever laughed more vehemently than did Lady Caroline when the Fitz-John invitation arrived at Caſtle Glanville. The decoration of the card firſt attracted her ſatiric wit; and, though it was meant for the head of Cerberus, ſhe perſiſted in calling it her dear friend's profile with the wig off. An Elyſian ſupper, given in a

ſmall

ſmall garden, in a country market town, was indeed a new wonder in the regions of *high-life*; and Lady Caroline vowed that nothing but phyſical incapacity ſhould deter her from enjoying all its extravagance.

In the midſt of her hilarity Mr. Brudenell had the courage to obſerve, that it was poſſible the mixture of company might be diſagreeable not only to Lady Caroline, but to Lord Glanville. This hint, though really urged in ſupport of the declining influence of paternal authority, only ſuggeſted to this lively genius the poſſibility of making the earl add to the ridiculouſneſs of the ſcene. Aware of Lady FitzJohn's views, ſhe reſolved that the hero of the night ſhould not be abſent, and ſhe took care at dinner to communicate the intelligence that all the corporation of W———— would certainly be preſent. She added, that they

they were violently difpleafed with their prefent member for giving bad dinners; and then, apparently changing the topic, obferved that a fpeedy diffolution of parliament was very much talked of. Lord Glanville was foon roufed from his reverie; and, deaf to his daughter's fuggeftions, that crowded rooms and late hours were very unwholefome, he refolved, to favour Lady Fitz-John with his company. Mr. Brudenell had no cynical abhorrence of innocent amufement, and Sophia readily yielded to the impulfe of youth, which prompts a fpontaneous and fincere welcome of feftive pleafures.

It may be expected, that the article of drefs engaged the attention of the ladies; and while Sophia was projecting a little ball-room finery, that would be at once taftefully elegant, and fimply neat, Lady Caroline's whimfical love of frolic directed her to her father's black velvet

velvet cap, which, ſhe obſerved, if bound on with a cambric handkerchief, and decorated with a bunch of Michaelmas daiſies, would become the prolific parent of all the head-dreſſes in W——, till ſuperſeded by ſomething more fantaſtical. Sophia's remonſtrance againſt affected ſingularity only induced Lady Caroline to contrive whether the earl's robe-de-chambre could not be likewiſe preſſed into the ſervice; and the timid Sophia now trembled at the idea of making her firſt debût in a new neighbourhood with ſuch a capricious companion. But her fears were relieved by one of thoſe ſudden tranſitions to which Lady Caroline's reſolves were always ſubject. Her ladyſhip appeared in the evening in all the paraphernalia of a woman of faſhion, and with an air expreſſive at once of her exalted rank, and of her reſolution to ſupport the decorum it required.

Sophia had no time to aſk the cauſe of this revolution, nor of the equally remarkable change that appeared in the manners, as well as the externals of her companion, whoſe gravity almoſt amounted to dejection. Not one lively ſally eſcaped her, till the coach ſtopped at Sir Peter's; and ſhe ſuffered Mr. Brudenell to lead her through the decorations, without the leaſt change of countenance. But as galas, balls, and maſquerades, have a poſitive right to ſome ſtrong mark of honorary diſtinction, I will dedicate an entire chapter to the wonders that immortalized Lady Fitz-John's entertainment.

## CHAP. XV.

*The dear Gala deſcribed, with a few Anecdotes of the Company.*

THE effect of the whole *coup d'œil*, on entering Lady FitzJohn's territories, was indeed ſtriking. A tranſparent painting being over the garden gate, intended to repreſent the Cumean Sybill; but, owing to ſome miſtake of the painter, and the negligence of the carpenter, added to the evening proving very ſtormy, the prophetic virgin was univerſally miſtaken for Mother Shipton, and the introductory kick with which ſhe ſaluted the company, was conſidered as a deſigned repetition of the practical

 joke,

joke, that has for ſo many years appalled all the bumpkins who viſit Mrs. Salmon's royal wax-work. As to elyſium itſelf, it wore but a comfortleſs appearance. The garden was naturally barren of ſhade, and the boughs of horſe-cheſnut, that had been ſtuck into the prim parterres for the occaſion, preſented only ſhrivelled leaves, mournfully drooping, though perhaps not improper for the haunt of ſpectres. Moſt of the variegated lamps were extinguiſhed by the wind, which had alſo blown off the flowery wigs with which her ladyſhip had decorated the bald pates of three leaden ſtatues, that ſtood pointing to the ſummer-houſe. In their original ſtate they were intended for Pan, Neptune, and Sir Richard Whittington. This laſt hero, who, as may be ſuppoſed, owed his elevation ſolely to Sir Peter's *bad taſte*, was voted too unlike a Greek

for

for this exhibition; for what could be done with the magisterial robe, the roll of parchment, and above all with the celebrated cat, who with due regard to costume was stationed at her master's feet. Invention, however, was Lady FitzJohn's forte; and she soon contrived an oiled paper surtout that covered the Lord Mayor's drapery; she lengthened the parchment roll into a tolerably sized club; and, by drawing a calf's-skin over Puss, converted her into a good Nemean lion, as she had done her master into a terrible Hercules. I must own, however, that as the new-made deity had no Ciceroni to announce his apotheosis, mistakes occurred in a mixt assembly, who were not all composed of literati; and the son of Jove was sometimes called one of the Furies, and sometimes denominated a new monster of Lady FitzJohn's own making,

 though

though far the greater part called him the bear and ragged ſtaff.

After ſome brief obſervations on theſe wonders, the company drew near the "ſilent waters;" but, though Charon was very alert with his boat, and the tuneful pair very harmonious with their fiddles, no one choſe to be ferried over the mud. An univerſal ſhiver ſeized the company, and, deaf to the voice of melody, they crowded into Pluto's palace, the ſize of which was rather calculated for an aſſemblage of their aërial ſhadows, than a mob of corporeal forms. The numerous gueſts, knowing that they muſt ſeem pleaſed, even while they felt heartily weary, preſſed their elbows to their ſides, and ſtood as firmly wedged as the famous Macedonian phalanx. Thoſe who had the beſt lungs contrived to ſhout out their acknowledgments to Lady FitzJohn for the pleaſure they enjoyed;

enjoyed; while the rest whispered some sarcastic observations, by way of relieving their own spleen to the unfortunate beings who were *pinioned* near them.

But scarcely could the voice of compliment subdue the chagrin of poor Lady FitzJohn. Circumstances more vexatious than the extinguished lamps, the withered trees, the bald statues or the kicking Sybill, had happened; for Mr. Artremidorus and his friend had returned from Brighton that very morning, exceedingly out of humour with their speculations there, and determined to spoil every entertainment. Having stalked about the ball-room in boots till they had rubbed all the coloured chalks off the floor, knocked down the wreaths of flowers with their canes, and fractured the stage on which Orpheus and Amphion, when no longer demi-gods, were to accompany the pipe and tambourine in the humble capacity of fiddlers;

fiddlers; they voted that the thing never would do, and advifed her ladyfhip by all means to difpatch expreffes and prevent people from coming. They then retired to the fupper-room, devoured the beft eatables, and pelted one another with paftry till they were tired. After thefe fatiguing exertions they drowned their cares in bumpers of Burgundy, and dropped afleep.

Though this behaviour was certainly the *very thing*, and might, if the vifitors had been limited to the grandees of W———, have paffed off as a good frolic intended to fhow them life, Lady FitzJohn feared that Lord Glanville's politenefs had fo much of the old fchool in it, that he would think the young bucks fhowed more eafe and freedom in the above adventure, than was confiftent with due refpect for a peer of the realm, who had engaged to honour a mere country tradefman with his pre-

 fence.

ſence. Abandoning every hope of playing off her gueſt as a new ſuitor to her beauteous daughter, all her ſolicitude was engaged by ſchemes to conceal the Bacchanals; and Meliſandriania herſelf, inſtead of receiving the company in ſtate, like another Proſerpine, tucked up her flowing drapery, and aſſiſted in rallying the feſtoons of flowers, and marſhalling the ſurviving jellies and ſyllabubs into ſome tolerable order. The head-clerk who was to officiate as groom of the chambers, with the name of Rhadamanthus, was in the mean time as anxiouſly employed in endeavouring to clear the ſupper-room of dead men; but before he could ſucceed the firſt carriage drove into the yard, and the lighted flambeaus announced the Randolph livery. The anxious houſe-maid now ruſhed in, exclaiming, "Oh, Mr. Scribble, Mr. Rhodomontade I mean, the *capitable* gentry are all come, and you muſt

muſt go down and lead them in directly."

Rhadamanthus, who, in ſtrict compliance with his character of a juſt judge, had not only doomed the inebriate pair to the cell of oblivion, but had actually ſupported Artremidorus to his bedchamber, and was now trying his ſkill on the other criminal lying ſenſeleſs on the floor, could only haſtily conſign Sir Bronze to the care of Betty, and, aſſuming the verger's gown, and apothecary's wig, advance with a magiſterial air to meet the company, or I ſhould rather ſay to introduce choice ſpirits to the delights of Elyſium. Betty now exerted all *her* powers to waken Sir Bronze, and perſuade him to walk off quietly; but, wearied with repeated excuſes of "all in good time," and "I'll be gone preſently," ſhe reſolved to have recourſe to the ſame expedients which Falſtaff practiſed on the lifeleſs Hotſpur.

Hotſpur. She had dragged her luggage as far as the door, when the ſound of ſome ſtrange voices on the ſtairs, alarmed her with the apprehenſion that all the *capitable* gentry were ruſhing it; and, knowing ſhe muſt at any rate clear the ſtage, ſhe fairly crammed the unreſiſting Sir Bronze into the china-cloſet; and, with an obſervation, that he might get ſober there for any thing he was good for, ſhe locked the door, and left him to finiſh his ſlumbers.

"Single diſappointments," ſays the old jeſt book, "never come alone." The feſtal ſcene ſuffered another deprivation by the abſence of Sir Peter, who, after having with great reluctance ſubmitted to be dreſſed in a ſtuffed coat and brutus wig for the occaſion, but half an hour before his doors were thrown open, received a packet of letters that required immediate attention. Neither Rhadamanthus nor Charon could

poſſibly

poſſibly be ſpared to aſſiſt him; and my lady, after raving againſt the narrow illiberal ſpirit of mercantile concerns, declared, that as he was *nobody* he would not be much miſſed, and that he and his ledgers might pack off together. But where to find a quiet retreat was the next difficulty. The counting-houſe was appropriated to the reception of the gentlemen's gentlemen; the laundry was aſſigned to the drivers; the ſcullery was turned into a refectory, and even the barn, cow-houſe, and pigſty, had been fitted up for the accommodation of her friends' retinue; being determined that every one ſhould ſay ſhe did things handſomely. No place was left vacant but the ice-houſe; and that being now emptied to ſupply the evening regale, Sir Peter determined to wrap himſelf up, and eſtabliſh his head-quarters in a ſpot which at leaſt promiſed quiet and ſecurity. Not ſuch quiet as he once en-

joyed in the halcyon days of " bleſſed ſingleneſs;" but, with the comparative comforts of his pipe, his Welch-rabbit, and his pen and ink, remote from all the noiſe and nonſenſe of the evening.

While theſe arrangements paſſed in the family " the moſt kind hoſteſs" did not feel ſufficiently at eaſe to ſay many good things to her gueſts in the garden, or to reliſh the many good things that were ſaid to her. Mr. Raymond had been ſo polite as to tell her that her Elyſium ſo far exceeded all his fancy had dared to paint, that he never wiſhed to ſee another. Lady Caroline proteſted, that it united all the principal attributes which poets aſſigned to thoſe dolorus regions; being dark, cold, comfortleſs, beſet with hideous forms, and very apt to inſpire melancholy thoughts. Even Lord Glanville, while he made his bow, ſo far ſlided into equivoque, as to declare, that he never ſhould forget

that

that evening's entertainment. Lady FitzJohn had nothing to do but to ſmile, curteſy, obſerve that her friends were *too* obliging, and herſelf the happieſt creature in the world. At laſt, the fair Meliſandriania appeared with a decanter in one hand and a rummer in the other, to ſhew that ſhe was Hebe; and announced, what was indeed joyful tidings to the inhabitants of the ſhades, namely, that for their good behaviour they were all to be admitted into Olympus.

Very little ceremony was neceſſary to tranſport the party to the upper regions. The ball and card-rooms were filled in an inſtant. The company ſtill crowded together, ſhrugged their ſhoulders, and with one conſent began to talk of rheums, catarrhs, and hectics; execrating the abſurdity of al freſco entertainments in this damp, uncertain climate. It being ſuggeſted, that immediate exerciſe was one of the moſt wholeſome expedients that could

could be reſorted to after having run any danger of taking cold, Lord Glanville declined cutting into the whiſt-table, and aſked Lady FitzJohn if ſhe would do him the honour to open the ball with him, by dancing a minuet. Her ladyſhip rather unopportunely remarked, that ſhe had given up dancing for ſome years, but propoſed her daughter as a ſubſtitute. There was no receding; the unreluctant fair, "nothing loath to hear his lordſhip's pleaded reaſon," already advanced, and fixed herſelf in the proper attitude; the muſic played, the company arranged themſelves, and the earl, with lovely Hebe by his ſide, found himſelf in a moſt conſpicuous and awkward ſituation.

Let me here pauſe, and inform my young readers, that, whatever they may think of it, there is ſure to be ſomething uncommonly graceful in an earl's dancing, eſpecially when he exhibits at a

country

country aſſembly. His bows indeed were rather ſtiff, his attitudes had more analogy to angles than curves, and his weighty ſolemn movements were a perfect contraſt to the airy graces of his youthful partner, who looked and moved the conſcious counteſs. But what were thoſe faults? Every body knew that he had not learnt yeſterday; and, for aught they could ſay, his lordſhip might have been the fineſt dancer of his own ſtanding. I am aſſured that the good breeding of the company would not have been violated by any further indication of mirth than a ſtolen ſimper, or whiſper behind a fan, if a lamentable cataſtrophe had not happened. At the very moment that the earl was advancing with extended arms to terminate the exhibition, juſt at the very inſtant when Lady FitzJohn, forgetting all her previous diſaſters, nodded a moſt ſignificant "This muſt do," the potent voice of

muſic, which once vanquiſhed Alexander, ſuddenly ceaſed, and a horrible craſh enſued: In ſhort, the orcheſtra, which had been but ſlightly put together at firſt, weakened by the aſſaults of the two Bacchanals in the morning, ſuddenly broke down, and Orpheus and Amphion, together with the vulgar herd, kits and fiddles, pipes and tabors, rolled helter ſkelter on the floor.

A pauſe enſued, "a pauſe of ſolemn awe." It was at firſt ſuppoſed, that the ceiling had given way, and that the whole party were half way on their journey to the wine-vaults; but, as the demigods roſe one after another, exclaiming, like Apollo in Midas, "Not a bone broken," the company ſoon took courage, and examined into the conſequences of this diſaſter; which, after a minute inveſtigation, were reduced to, Imprimis, a broken fiddle; 2dly, a fractured fiddle-ſtick; 3dly, the complete

deſtruction of the tambourine; which, either from miſchance or envy at ſuperior harmony, encountered the head of Orpheus in falling, and, being compoſed of more penetrable ſtuff, yielded in the conflict, and encircled the neck of the triumphant bard, ſomewhat like the collar of a military order. Laſtly, and what was certainly the moſt to be lamented, the delicate nerves of the too ſuſceptible Meliſandriania received ſuch a ſhock, that ſhe immediately fell into hyſterics. Now, though theſe hyſterics were as becoming as poſſible, Lord Glanville did not recollect that it was his duty to ſupport the lady, and apply the ſmelling bottle; he coolly reſigned her to the care of Miſs La Rouge, and without expreſſing any ſympathy for Lady FitzJohn's affliction at her daughter's exquiſite ſenſibility, joined the merry circle who were laughing at the conſequences of the late diſaſter. Con-

ſcious

ſcious that his own exploits had bordered on the ridiculous, he thought it politic to adopt the ſame unbecoming expreſſion of vulgar mirth; but ſoon, reſuming his wonted circumſpection, he liſtened to hear whether his daughter's voice did not predominate in the clamorous merriment. Aſtoniſhed at its not being diſtinguiſhable, he felicitated himſelf that he had at laſt prevailed on her to obſerve decorum and etiquette; when, looking round to ſee how ſhe was occupied, he was alarmed at diſcovering that ſhe was not in the room. Thought ſpeedily crowded upon thought; he recollected that, among the gliding ſhades whom he had recognized in "the palpable obſcure" of Pluto's palace, he had caught a glimpſe of Raymond's figure; and as he alſo was abſent, a certain aſſociation took place in the earl's mind which expreſſed more antiquated ariſtocracy than modern greatneſs of

ſoul.

ſoul. Cold as the night air *now* was, and much as he ſhuddered at the idea of increaſing his latent fever, he was again haſtening to explore the garden, when his fears were inſtantly relieved, or I ſhould rather ſay diverted into another channel, by the appearance of his daughter, in the full heyday of vivacity, and exclaiming "you are the only partner I will dance with to night." The reluctant priſoner whom ſhe dragged after her looked like hoary Hyem chained to the car of May, and was not immediately diſcovered to be Sir Peter himſelf, accoutered in a white flannel night-cap, drawn over his black wig, and his gala coat half concealed by a red roquelaure. Why Lady Caroline happened to be left in the garden, and how ſhe came to ſtorm Sir Peter's "tower of froſt," muſt be told another time; ſuffice it now to ſay, that the pleading captive endeavoured to evade the

the decrees of his conqueror without ſucceſs; not even a change of dreſs was allowed; and Lady FitzJohn, who had juſt invented a very good tale to excuſe her huſband's abſence, after ſuch a diſcovery, had nothing to do but to declare that his odd humours wanted rubbing off, and that Lady Caroline's wit was irreſiſtible. The muſic recommenced as well as the deranged ſtate of the orcheſtra would permit, and Sir Peter's country dancing ſoon obliterated all recollection of Lord Glanville's minuet. After having amuſed the company till the jeſt grew tireſome, his capricious partner releaſed him from his engagement, and, declining dancing any longer herſelf, retired to a corner of the room, rather teazed than flattered by the adulation that ſurrounded her, and a prey to that fretful inquietude which always denotes a mind diſſatisfied with itſelf.

Sophia's

Sophia's adventures at this ball muſt all be reſerved for *future* explanation. Her figure was leſs calculated to attract attention than Lady Caroline's, and ſhe had a vaſt deal of that exploded manner which our divine Milton aſcribes to Eve in her ſtate of innocence, "Not obvious, not obtruſive; but retired, the more deſirable." But, though I cannot charge her with ſaying one word or aſſuming one poſture during the whole evening for the ſake of being looked at, a new ſtar can never appear in the horizon of a country ball-room without exciting eager curioſity to know in what conſtellation it ſhould be claſſed. To "Who is ſhe?" it was anſwered, "The grand-daughter of the old clergyman who accompanies her," and it was alſo thought a relation of Lord Glanville's. To "Is ſhe a perſon of fortune?" there were two replies; one ſtated, that it was reported Lord Glanville would give her

ſomething

ſomething handſome; and others proteſted that ſhe was nothing more than an humble couſin whom Lady Caroline had choſen for her companion. Sophia's claims to beauty and elegance fluctuated as thoſe opinions reſpectively loſt or gained ground for ſome time; but the uniform charms of artleſs ſweetneſs and obliging affability at laſt obtained their due aſcendancy; and, though Lady Caroline behaved in the moſt *ſtyliſh* manner the whole evening, all that portion of the good-natured world which Lady FitzJohn had aſſembled round her, pitied the amiable young creature, who muſt certainly ſuffer a vaſt deal from Lady Caroline's *uncertain* humours.

General admiration, however, is not the ſpecies of homage to which moſt young ladies aſpire; and all my fair readers, who have been duly prepared by the labours of my predeceſſors to unite the ideas of a dance and a lover,

are;

are, doubtlefs, indignant at the fpleen of gray virginity, which muft have prompted me not only to deviate from all precedent, but even to lock up the only two beaux who had any chance of making tolerable lovers. It will be but a fmall extenuation of my fault, if I fhould obferve, that thefe gentlemen belong to an order of beings who glory in their apathy, and, after piquing themfelves upon affronting every woman of character they meet, generally terminate their career of gallantry, either by taking an antiquated courtefan into keeping, or elfe by preferring fome handfome houfemaid who has had low cunning enough to entrap them into an illicit connexion, and to make them fuffer all the miferies of abject fubjection and ruinous expence, while they footh their galled fpirit, with fanciful ideas of freedom. I know that I ought to have given my heroines fuch charms as would even

have

have penetrated the frigid zone of modern puppyiſm; and I can no otherways make my peace than by hinting, that I have a lover in reſerve to introduce at the proper ſeaſon.

We will now return to the company, and ſeat them in proper order round the ſupper tables. Good eating is confeſſedly congenial with John Bull's conſtitution; and all preceding embarraſſments and diſappointments were abſorbed in the hope that this part of the entertainment would go off with eclat. But Lady FitzJohn, being perſuaded that ball-ſuppers are only deſigned to be looked at, and having obſerved that nobody at Glanville caſtle ate more than a ſandwich and five dried cherries, originally calculated her eatables by this rule, and depended chiefly on painted pâtés, and baſkets of flowers to aſſiſt her plateau in covering her table. It cannot be forgotten, that the two divine

vine engaging fellows had made irreparable devaſtation among the *digeſtible* ornaments; and, though the appearance of the ſupper-table ſtill preſented a gay profuſion to the eye, and extorted exclamations from the ladies of "How very pretty!" "How exceſſively ſmart!" the groſſer taſte of the gentlemen diſcovered itſelf in *mournfully* inquiring of the fair partners, "Whether there really was any thing that they could help them to?"

The civil compliments which this *beautiful* repaſt extorted from every *beholder* ſomewhat relieved Lady Fitz-John's chagrin at her many mortifications. She forgot that her daughter, to whom this feſtival was to have proved a prelude to an Hymeneal triumph, had ſat neglected ever ſince the hyſteric ſcene, being avoided by the beaux, who declared themſelves afraid of agitating ſuch extreme ſenſibility, and laughed at by

by the belles for having played off an unſucceſsful artifice. Happy at gleaning up a little ſcattered importance, Lady FitzJohn began to deſcribe what her regale would have been, if ſhe had not been diſappointed in various particulars. She dwelt upon the hard fate of a hamper of moſt exquiſite viands, which had been rolled in the dirt by the overturn of the London *flying waggon;* and ſpoke of the calamitous end of the pines and peaches, that ſunk to the bottom of the canal, through the careleſsneſs of the bargemen. Every body good naturedly recollected ſimilar diſaſters that had happened to themſelves; at leaſt, every body *could* recollect the ingenious excuſes by which meagre entertainments had been *cheaply* gilded over, by ſpoiling baſkets of fiſh that had never been caught, and miſdirecting haunches of veniſon belonging to deer who were alive and merry at that inſtant. Perceiving

ceiving that etiquette required another half hour to be ſpent in eating, or to ſpeak more accurately, in moving the jaws, as Schacabac did in the Arabian tales, while he ſeemed to devour the Barmecide's imaginary lamb and lozenges; her ladyſhip proceeded to give an account of the terrible accident that had prevented her ſon and his friend from being preſent at this feſtivity. "They were imprudently driving againſt time," ſaid ſhe, "being ſo very anxious to meet this moſt agreeable company; when, going down a ſteep hill, both the horſes fell; over went the curricle; out went the gentlemen, ſo dreadfully bruiſed by the fall, that——" A loud yawn from the china cloſet interrupted her narrative; an univerſal alarm, and as univerſal an inquiry of, "Did you hear that noiſe?" ſucceeded. I am not ſure that a few of the ladies might not apprehend that a ſupernatural viſitor

 would

would inftantly appear; and as Lady FitzJohn dealt in wonders, it was poffible that fhe might have Sir Walter and King Ragodrum Logdum both in the clofet. I doubt whether the appearance of thefe renowned warriors could have given Lady FitzJohn a greater fhock than fhe received on hearing Sir Bronze, whom fhe fuppofed in bed in the attics, with a volley of oaths demand to be let out, and fwear that they had fhut him in a bandbox. Some of the ladies fcreamed, others fainted, the more prudent waited to fee how Lady Caroline behaved before they fported any *becoming* extravagancies. The gentlemen crowded to the part of the room from whence the noife iffued, and forming themfelves into a circle, as you always fhould do when you argue with a ghoft, they demanded of the invifible fpectre its reafons for "making night hideous." "Let me out" was the only anfwer; but, as thefe words

words were accompanied by three obſtreperous kicks at the cloſet door, it was ſagaciouſly obſerved, that this boiſterous behaviour did not accord with the uſual manners of a gliding ſpectre. An unlucky wit remarked that the thief who ſtole the ſupper had fallen aſleep in tha cloſet, and forgot to run away. The clamour increaſed every moment, and with it the cries of the ladies to kep him in till they were gone.

A pauſe of aſtoniſhmen ſpeedily ſucceeded to this wild uproa. The lock yielded to the violent effort of the priſoner, and forth ſtepped, neither felon nor goblin, but the gay Sir Bronze; who, with the eaſy nonchalance of ine breeding, ſlightly bowed, apologized for his miſtake, hoped he had not diſturbed the company, and, walking to the upper end of the room, adjuſted his cravat in the pier-glaſs. With very enviable effrontery

frontery he lamented that any body ſhould think him of ſufficient conſequence to ſuſpend the amuſement on his account; and, after an inquiry of "What ſhall we do now? I am ready for any thing;" he looked round to obſerve the ſmile of general admiration. But in this reſpect Sir Bronze's triumphs were incomplete; for, though a few of the W—— Narciſſuſes devoured the glorious extravagance with looks that ſeemed to ſay, "I'll play it off the firſt opportunity," the ariſtocratic party behaved with that cool contempt which muſt have convinced a leſs impenetrable coxcomb that he had overſhot the mark of *eaſe*. The gay freedom of Lady Caroline's manner was chilled by avowed hauteur when he attempted to talk to her; and, contrary to his own idolized laws of good breeding, Lord Glanville interrupted the baronet's account of the moſt celebrated

demireps of Brighton, by condescending to explain to the company the mal-administration and deplorable aspect of public affairs. In strict conformity to the established rule of never listening to a *great* man when a *greater* is talking, Sir Bronze saw his auditors gradually file off, and himself doomed to contribute to the general amusement, either in the capacity of an humble dancer or quiet card-player. He chose the latter, and ingeniously contrived to give a little impetus to his own feelings, and to relieve himself from the mortification of perceiving that he was of as little importance as when asleep in the china closet, by the happy device of high betting. At a late hour the party broke up. The plebeians enchanted with the entertainment, delighted with the Glanville ladies, and in raptures with my lord; who, though such a very great man, talked to Mr. Mayor with great affability

affability for half an hour, played at whiſt with his lady, and ſhook hands with *all* the aldermen. Sir Bronze, on the other hand, was voted to be *nobody*, and all the young ladies rejoiced that the odious Artremidorus was not preſent.

Thus ended the gala; and let me here apprize thoſe of my young readers to whom balls and lovers are ſtill unknown, that theſe grand deſiderata are not a ſovereign ſpecific againſt *diſaſters*. Like the cap of Fortunatus, and the ring of Gyges, they are often the parents of perplexities; and young Hope has more cauſe to complain of diſappointment than ſatiety. Moſt fêtes, like Lady FitzJohn's, are a mixed ſcene, productive of alternate amuſement and chagrin both to the entertainer and the entertained; and I can deſcribe no ſpell more likely to enſure the former, and abate the latter, than that the hoſt

ſhould

ſhould not aim at ſomething *tranſcendantly fine*, and that the gueſts ſhould never wiſh to be thought *faſtidiouſly elegant.*

## CHAP. XVI.

*Illiberal Prejudices proved to be conſiſtent with liberal Conduct.*

Sophia met Mr. Brudenell, in the library at Glanville caſtle, before the earl and Lady Caroline had left their apartments. After a good-humoured laugh at diſappointed vanity, which the Fitz-Johns richly deſerved, Mr. Brudenell turned the diſcourſe to more intereſting ſubjects. Though no one had more liberally contributed to the real pleaſure of the ſcene than himſelf, or had ſeemed more agreeably obſervant of the claims that ſociety forms upon real politeneſs, his anxious eye had ſtill been fixed where

where his heart moſt fondly doated; and he ſaw that Sophia was an object, not only of general attention, but alſo of approbation.

Beſide this, he made a ſtill more pleaſant diſcovery. A more particular ſentiment ſeemed to agitate the boſom of a young officer, whom Sir John Randolph announced by the name of Lord Viſcount Selborne. He had ſought an early opportunity to be introduced to the Glanville party; engaged Sophia for the firſt two dances; and when etiquette compelled him to reſign her, he always took care to ſecure her hand at the next change of partners. At ſupper he placed himſelf at her ſide; and the various events of the evening ſeemed no otherwiſe to intereſt *him*, than as they gave him opportunities of ſtudying her truly amiable character. Mr. Brudenell particularly obſerved, that when Sir

 Bronze

Bronze accosted his charge with an air of insolent freedom, and she silenced his effrontery by a civil curtesy, a reserved look, and a cold monosyllable, Lord Selborne was so far overpowered by his feelings, as to exclaim "Admirable!"—"How, madam," said he, while her face glowed at the appropriate compliment, "must your admirers shew their devotion? *You* will never want a protector."

It was on the subject of Lord Selborne that Mr. Brudenell wished to catechize his grand-daughter; but, as all my female readers will agree that the answers to such an examination must be very difficult, they will not wonder that she found her sleeves ill adjusted, and was in a considerable hurry for her breakfast. But when, from questioning her respecting her opinion of Lord Selborne, Mr. Brudenell changed the subject into an inquiry

inquiry of what he had talked about, Sophia recovered her powers of utterance; and she soon proved, that his remarks corresponded with the promise that his countenance gave of agreeableness and intelligence.

"You have examined me pretty closely," said Sophia with a smile: "Now, dear Sir, it is my turn to interrogate you. Pray how came Lady Caroline, Mr. Raymond, and you, to be out of the room when the orchestra tumbled? and what was the reason of her uncommon gravity the whole evening? She positively declined dancing after her frisk with Sir Peter, fixed herself in a musing posture, and intimidated the beaux as much by her solemnity as Miss FitzJohn had disgusted them by her affectation."

"I never take upon me to account for a fine lady's eccentricities," replied Mr. Brudenell. "Most probably, Lady Caroline

Caroline got up yeſterday morning with a reſolution to be *whimſical.*"

"Dear Sir, this is not fair. You affect to know nothing, when I am ſure you might relieve my curioſity,"

"I have often told you," replied Mr. Brudenell, "that curioſity is the bane of your ſex; and I will uſe this opportunity of giving you a practical lecture on the art of ſubduing it."

"Ah!" ſaid Sophia, "even my grandpapa is not quite free from maſculine prejudices. Even he cannot help treating us poor women like ſubordinate creatures. What in a man is laudable inquiry, is mere inquiſitiveneſs in us. Here have I been owning all my ſecrets, while he, dumb and reſerved,——"

"Hold, Sophy," interrupted Mr. Brudenell. "Have you really told me *all* your ſecrets? Solicitude for your happineſs juſtifies my concern; but, as I do not ſee how you are intereſted in an

an explanation of Lady Caroline's conduct, I will be as dumb and reserved as you *try* to be."

"I have nothing to confess," replied Sophia.

"Except," said Mr. Brudenell archly, "that you were almost as well pleased with Lord Selborne as he seemed to be with you. That blush developes the mystery, and now, indeed, my Sophy has nothing to confess."

"Provoking indeed!" returned the young lady. "Why, dear grandpapa, you do take up such very odd notions. What does it signify what I think of Lord Selborne?"

Mr. Brudenell now in his turn began to stir the fire, and express some anxiety for Lady Caroline's appearance.

Sophia repeated the question.—"I will no longer sport with a reserve which is indeed not only a con-

ſtituent but alſo an *amiable* part of the female character," returned Mr. Brudenell. "But, as frankneſs becomes *me*, I will tell you that you were the motive that drew Lord Selborne to the ball laſt night; and as, to judge from his behaviour, he does not think that your manner belies your fair fame, you may ſoon expect him to declare himſelf your admirer."

Sophia ſtarted: a tenfold degree of animation lighted up her countenance, while ſhe exclaimed, "Indeed! ſurely that would be very precipitate."

"I think it would," obſerved Mr. Brudenell; "but ſuffer me to proceed. Do you recollect your old friend Sir William Evans at Bath? he to whom you were ſo attentive, that the lady goſſips of the place accuſed you of a matrimonial deſign on the gouty bachelor?"

"He

"He was ſo very agreeable, that there might be ſome truth in the report," replied Sophia ſmiling.

"Well, my dear, he only wiſhes to *transfer* your affections to a more ſuitable object. Lord Selborne is Sir William's nephew and heir. His character ſtands high in the eſtimation of ſenſible people. He is ſaid to have paſſed through the ordeal of a military life with high reſpectability. He is termed a polite ſcholar. I am partial to politeneſs, and I venerate a ſcholar. You may gather my ſentiments of him from what I have ſaid; but there are two other parties to be conſulted, Lord Glanville and your own heart. You will ceaſe to wonder at my wiſhing to diſcover the firſt impreſſions that his behaviour has made upon you; and I want alſo to guard you againſt the ſurprize of a haſty declaration. I truſt you

you will have many other opportunities of conſidering his conduct, before you are called upon for a poſitive deciſion: for *general* eſtimation is too indefinite ground to be a fit foundation for *particular* regard. Very worthy people may be rendered unhappy in ſo intimate a connexion as that of marriage, merely by having diſſimilar taſtes, or adverſe habits.

"As to Lord Glanville, I have not apprized Selborne of your dependence upon that nobleman; but the more I ſee of his character, the more do I wiſh you ſafe in the protection of ſome worthy man, who may ſupport you under thoſe trials to which the earl's ſingula[illegible] may expoſe you."

"[illegible] I not have your ſupport?" [illegible] Sophia eagerly.

"You will have more *permanent* ſupport than mine," returned Mr. Brude-

nell

nell with pious energy; "approving conſcience, and the ever-preſent Deity. My clerical functions will ſoon call me from you; but you are not unacquainted with the duty of communing with your own heart. When your own ſtrength fails, look up, my child, with holy confidence, and expect the aſſiſting grace that will not be refuſed to humble integrity. You will be ſurrounded by artifice; but reſt aſſured, "they that walk uprightly walk ſecurely."

"And now, Sophy, to return to Lord Selborne. Sir William Evans has requeſted me to plead his nephew's cauſe; but I no farther wiſh him yours, than as I conceive ſuch an event may promote your mutual happineſs, and forbore to prepare you for meeting [illegible] his Lady FitzJohn's, for I wiſhed [illegible] appear in your natural character, which a conſciouſneſs of his intentions might have obſcured. I would premiſe, that

Lord

Lord Glanville may probably ſtart objections. It is impoſſible to ſay how a man will act who would only perform an act of natural juſtice from compulſory motives. But, ſhould you encounter oppoſition and cruelty, remember that where you cannot act as you would Providence calls upon you to exerciſe the *paſſive* virtues; and it ſhould ſeem that the occaſions for theſe qualities are moſt numerous, or that the practice of them is moſt difficult, ſince Chriſtianity diſtinguiſhes them by her higheſt promiſes."

Lady Caroline's entrance prevented Mr. Brudenell from proceeding. She ſeemed ſo far to have conquered her chagrin as to be able to reaſſume her accuſtomed vivacity; but her pallid cheek and unquiet eye were unequivocal ſymptoms of a diſordered mind. Indeed, this lady's preſent ſituation was by

by no means such as to encourage the imitation of thoſe who conceive themſelves entitled to act with lofty diſregard to the opinions and ſentiments of others. At the commencement of her clandeſtine correſpondence with Raymond, ſhe felt no ſtronger motive than a determination to ſhew the earl of Glanville that her ſentiments of natural freedom and paternal authority agreed with the liberality of his *precepts*, and not with the narrowneſs of his conduct. But in the hour in which they firſt yield to temptation offenders never look at the train of attendant evils. Lady Caroline was reputed to be the richeſt heireſs in England, and was of courſe too tempting a prize to be readily relinquiſhed by a needy adventurer like Raymond; and though, on diſcovering that Lord Glanville had not been acceſſory to the change in Sir John Randolph's behaviour,

viour, ſhe became ſincerely deſirous to drop the private correſpondence, her lover was too firmly attached to permit *her* to retreat. In vain did ſhe endeavour to give her former conduct the colouring of levity and caprice; he would not ſuffer the beloved of his ſoul to accuſe herſelf of faults abhorrent to her nature. He, indeed, allowed her to be charming in every humour; but he hinted, as *his* firm perſuaſion, that her honour would not permit her to diſſolve the ties that ſubſiſted between them, that kept him compoſed under the multiplicity of apprehenſions which her ſuperior merit and his own peculiarly difficult ſituation ſuggeſted. Lady Caroline, in her anſwer to this dolorous epiſtle, denied a conſciouſneſs of the ties that he alluded to; and Raymond, in another letter, declared that what her hand and ſeal had authenticated, her hand and ſeal could not invalidate. "If my

my final doom," said he, "be fixed, if her whom I have believed to be the most exalted and generous of beings be only mutable faithless woman, her own words alone shall convince me of this transformation. O Lady Caroline! if you would indeed avoid that self-reproach which I know you must feel if my ungovernable passion should drive me to an act of desperation, favour me with one minute's privacy at the gala this evening."

It may be observed, that Mr. Raymond did not explain what was this desperate action to which disappointed love might irresistibly impel him. A tender-hearted nymph, whose soft imagination can never reconcile the ideas of life and a despairing lover, would infallibly have conjured up bowls, daggers, pistols, and all the horrible apparatus of suicide. Lady Caroline knew the world better, and conjectured that

her

her ſwain's attack would rather be made upon *her* reputation, than on his own exiſtence. She had been taught to ſet the higheſt value upon unſpotted fame; and, though her peculiar caſt of character did not lead her to purſue the idol admiration in the form of mildneſs, timidity, deference, prudence, and delicacy; her ſcorn of the gentler virtues was counterbalanced by a more ardent idolatry of exalted qualities. She could bear to hear it ſaid that Lady Caroline Glanville was raſh, precipitate, ungovernable, and capricious, becauſe thoſe faults were not incompatible with beauty, genius, and greatneſs of ſoul; but ſhe ſhrunk from the imputation of folly, and all that weakneſs which ignorance and ſuſceptibility gild with the name of pure diſintereſted love. She conſidered the firſt match in England not above her ambition, and a huſband deſtitute of rank and fortune as a dreadful degradation.

tion. She had no objection to Raymond's feeling the power of her charms, for ſhe panted for univerſal empire; but her ſoul indignantly revolted at the thought that ſhe had given him any colourable pretence for boaſting that he had made an impreſſion on her heart.

In this humour ſhe ſet out for Fitz-John Place. Fearful that her character would not require the diverſity of *affected* folly, ſhe abandoned the ſcheme of eccentric dreſs, and determined to awe her preſumptuous adorer by the magnificence of her appearance, and to ſilence his audacious voice by the auſterity of her frowns. A glimmering light is equally unfavourable to the diſplay of coſtly ornaments and indignant glances; and, though her ladyſhip had practiſed a ſtep, a toſs, and a ſwing, as petrifying as the head of Meduſa, theſe graces were inevitably loſt in a crowded

 cabin,

cabin, where no one could command more ſpace than what they were ſcrewed into by the conflux of company. Unfortunately too, either from deſign or accident, the bow that Mr. Raymond made Lord Glanville at his entrance was not returned; and the ſuggeſtion that her father certainly intended to have recourſe to ſome unjuſt coercion, ſoftened her heart in favour of a lover who (eſpecially if compared with the reſt of the groupe) had a vaſt deal of the true gentleman in his addreſs and manner. He ſaid ſeveral good things which were received with eclat; it was evident, or at leaſt Lady Caroline thought ſo, that if he had choſen to have directed his devoirs to Miſs Randolph, they would have been favourably received; for her advances were too unequivocal to be miſtaken. Here then was the ground of Sir John's reſentment; and, though Lady

Lady Caroline judged too favourably of her own merits to put herſelf upon a level with a country baronet's daughter, ſtill it could be pleaded, that the exiſtence of a rival removed all charge of *ſingularity* from her choice, while conſtancy in his attachments threw ſome rays of romantic ſplendor on Raymond's character. Thus pondering, when the company were ſummoned to leave the temple, ſhe ſaw him advance without abhorrence, and, at the moment of accepting his hand to lead her to the houſe, ſhe quite forgot the lightning glance and annihilating frown that was to have baniſhed him for ever. She was ſo well amuſed by his dry cauſtic raillery, as to expreſs a wiſh to ſee the redoubtable Hercules, and the obſtreperous Sybil that had ſo much diverted all who ſaw them; and there was ſo much to laugh at in theſe oddities, that, ſomehow

or

or other, Lady Caroline and Mr. Raymond remained in the "myrtle grove," while the reſt of the party crowded round the blazing hearths in the higher regions.

I will not minutely detail the converſation that enſued. Lady Caroline continued to proteſt that ſhe had never made any engagement, till Raymond, in an agony of deſpair, offered to return all the letters that ſhe had ſent him, and rely entirely upon what her honour ſhould decide after their peruſal. He then ſpoke of himſelf as a *perſecuted* man. Lady Caroline caught eagerly at that term; and, after ſome artful circumlocution, Raymond heſitatingly owned, that Lord Glanville's averſion to him proceeded to ſuch ungentleman-like lengths, that he had procured him to be diſcharged from three manors, and left out of four dining parties; and he

he then aſked the lady how it was poſſible for the attention with which ſhe had favoured him to remain unſuſpected, if her father's officious malice continued to countenance the ſuggeſtions of impertinence and detraction? Her ladyſhip's ſentiments on this head may readily be anticipated. She vented her indignation in the ſtrongeſt language; and ſo impetuous was her thirſt for vengeance, that ſhe liſtened to Raymond's arguments on the expediency of freeing herſelf from ſuch unwarrantable tyranny, without any *immediate* marks of diſapprobation. At this inſtant ſhe perceived a gentleman in black ſufficiently near them to give her cauſe to ſuſpect that they were overheard.

When pride ſtoops to folly or baſeneſs, the keenneſs of its ſenſations often betrays it into a greater degree of weakneſs and abſurdity. Lady Caroline had

only caught a glimpſe of the ſtranger; ſhe did not immediately conſider that he might be only a caſual wanderer in the Stygian ſhades, and not a ſpy upon her conduct; or that, while there was a chance that their converſation had not been overheard, it would be as wiſe to appear to be only admiring Hercules: yet, yielding to the timidity of conſcious error, ſhe could think of no other alternative than immediate flight. A half open door and glimmering light decided her choice of a place of concealment; and ſhe darted, very mal-à-propos, into Sir Peter's dormitory. His uncouth appearance, and their mutual ſurpriſe at this odd rencontre gave a new turn to her thoughts, and ſuggeſted the excuſe that ſhe had ſtaid behind on purpoſe to diſcover his retreat.

Though this apology, and the merriment that her levity excited, ſerved to gloſs over her abſence for the preſent, the

the recollection of the man in black haunted her with the conviction that there had been a witnefs of her folly. Her folicitude to difcover who this undefired confident could be, foon terminated in certainty. Mr. Brudenell was the only gentleman abfent; and, on his entering the room foon after, Lady Caroline found it impoffible any longer to fupport her feigned vivacity. She fat down to ruminate on the mortifying certainty that fhe had degraded herfelf in the eyes of the only perfon whofe approbation fhe was anxious to acquire, becaufe that approbation was founded on immutable principles, and was never fubjected to the fluctuations of fpleen, rafh prejudice, or blind partiality.

I would here fubmit one admonition to the attention of worthy characters. Let me intreat them to confider the vaft importance of engrafting the *amiable* graces on the ftock of *intrinfic* goodnefs;

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by reflecting on the happy influence that ſuch a combination ever has, as well on thoſe who indulge themſelves in immoral exceſſes, as on thoſe who, while they ſcoff at *abſtract* theories of virtue, cannot avoid reverencing its living image when adorned with its *genuine* attributes. Lady Caroline could deſpiſe the cenſure of a hoſt of fools. She could have retorted ſcorn, repelled impertinence, ridiculed officious zeal, and refuted the dogmatiſm of cynical ſuperciliouſneſs; but to the ſilent rebuke of genuine worth, to a cenſure pointed by real friendſhip, and ſoftened by benevolent regret, ſhe was keenly ſuſceptible. She fancied that Mr. Brudenell at once condemned and pitied her weakneſs. She thought that ſhe beheld the gentle Sophy bluſhing at her folly; and, while ſhe anticipated theſe evils, the adulation of rival coxcombs and the envy of rival belles were diſregarded.

Lady

Lady Caroline impatiently wiſhed for an opportunity of converſing alone with Mr. Brudenell. It ſoon occurred; and, for the firſt time in her life, ſhe found herſelf deſerted by the gay powers of wit and invention. She endeavoured ſo to lead the converſation, as to induce Mr. Brudenell to diſcover what he knew, without her being in danger either of needleſsly criminating herſelf, or of ſtill farther forfeiting the good man's favour, by affecting to diſguiſe what was well known. Mr. Brudenell ſaw her perplexity, and humanely relieved it.—"Am I," ſaid he, "preſumptuous in ſuppoſing that your ladyſhip wiſhes to put my frequent aſſurances of friendſhip to the teſt, by engaging me as your confident? Believe me, madam, my zeal to ſerve you ſhall only be bounded by my ability ſo to do; nor ſhall I preſcribe any conditions. You well know what ſervices will accord with my character and

and function, and I am persuaded that you will require no other."

"Are you acquainted with Mr. Raymond?" inquired Lady Caroline with hesitation.

"No other way than from what I saw of him yesterday evening."

"And may I ask your opinion of him from that knowledge?"

"I should hope, madam, that he has some very valuable properties, to counterbalance the impropriety of the conversation which, pardon me, I undesignedly heard him address to you."

"Lord Glanville has used him in the basest manner."

"I know not his lordship's reasons, madam; but I think that Mr. Raymond cannot properly urge his attempt to seduce you to consent to a clandestine elopement, as a proof that your father has *mistaken* his disposition."

"He

"He has been treated in a manner which no gentleman could endure."

"Ought he then to throw off that character," said Mr. Brudenell with energy, "and act the part of the meanest fortune-hunter, or the most desperate adventurer? I presume not to doubt the existence of some meritorious qualities. I conceive that without them he could not have made any progress in your good opinion. But the man whom you favour should be chary of your reputation. Honoured by so flattering a preference, he should respect your fair fame, and lay it down as the grand outline of his conduct, that the world will think him utterly unworthy of you, if he should take advantage of your regard to *seduce* you to an action that will call in question your prudence, your delicacy, and your filial piety."

"My prudence and my delicacy, Sir," said Lady Caroline, colouring, "are,

and I truſt ever will be, unqueſtioned. As to what you term filial piety, our ideas differ. I diſown all ties to the earl of Glanville, but thoſe of general good will. I have no reaſon to thank him for being the involuntary cauſe of my exiſtence. The laws of his country compelled him to ſupport me. He beſtowed an expenſive education on me, to gratify his own vanity; but in that education his precepts and his practice were eternally at variance. I formed my own character; and the rules that he ſtrove to imprint on my memory bade me deſpiſe his ſelfiſhneſs, his mean dread of death, and his ſtill meaner envy of thoſe who were to ſupply his place on the ſtage of exiſtence. Since the introduction of yourſelf and Sophia into the family, though it is an event at which I rejoice, as I truſt it bleſſes me with the ſociety of two faithful friends whom I can eſteem, my ſentiments with

reſpect

refpect to Lord Glanville have become more decided; I contraft your franknefs with his referve, your defire to make others happy with that fretful anxiety which in him continually revolves in the narrow circle of individual gratification. You ftudy no difguifes, you fearch for no opportunity of difplaying your own excellencies. I *hear* from him nothing but his own panegyric, or fome hollow compliment; and I *fee* in him nothing but meannefs, vanity, and diffimulation. I fpeak frankly, Mr. Brudenell, for my foul detefts deceit; and I will own, what indeed I could not difguife, that you have piqued me by the freedom of your remarks on Mr. Raymond. But do not leave me," continued fhe, burfting into tears at feeing Mr. Brudenell rifing as if to retire; "counfel, direct, if you can *preferve* me. I lay no injunction on you, but what fuits your facred charac-

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ter. To proteƈt the orphan is a part of your duty, and I am as an orphan."

It may be conceived that thoſe feelings muſt be acute which could bend the lofty ſpirit of Lady Caroline Glanville to the humility of intreaty, or to the weakneſs of apparent grief. Mr. Brudenell was deeply affeƈted.—"Let me," ſaid he, "firſt expreſs my regret for having offended you, and then promiſe to perſevere in the ſervices that you require of me, even if I ſhould ſo far wound your keen ſuſceptibility, as to awaken your—I truſt only momentary—reſentment. You have required my aſſiſtance by ſuch a ſacred claim, as no ſtart of petulance, I will even ſay no *erroneous conduƈt*, can invalidate. And now, not to waſte our time in vain profeſſions, let me ſuggeſt a plan that may reſtore your peace of mind. Whatever your ſentiments of Lord Glanville

ville may be, I am convinced that your heart would be more at eafe if he were acquainted with your intentions in favour of Mr. Raymond. Suffer me to inform him of your preference for that gentleman."

"Ah, Mr. Brudenell! I thought you better fkilled in the art of reading characters. In the firft place, can you be ignorant that, unlefs a very ftrong light enabled you to fee the earl grind his teeth and contract his brows, his words would not convey to you the leaft fhadow of his intentions or wifhes? He would tell you, that his daughter was free as air, that whoever fhe felected would be moft welcome to the participation of his fortune, and to the firft place in his friendfhip. And, perhaps, the next day the country would be inquiring why Raymond *fuddenly* difappeared. Dead men tell no tales, Mr. Brudenell."

 "O,

"O, Lady Caroline! ſuch ſuggeſtions not only tranſcend the bounds of duty, but of charity alſo, and I will add of *juſtice.*"

"Can *you* then forget Miſs Aubrey's hiſtory, the murder of her brother, and the cruel deſertion of your Sophy's brave unhappy father? You gently gloſſed over this ſtory when you repeated it to me; but, beſide what I have gained from Jervais, I have had a ſight of Mrs. Herbert's affecting narrative. That tale of ſorrow, deſtitute of all artificial colouring, ſpeaks to the heart, and requires no comment. Have I not alſo my own mother's well-remembered wrongs to revenge? She tenderly loved *me*, and I know her heart was broken by the cruel injuries and baſe neglect that ſhe experienced. O, Mr. Brudenell! be ingenuous; confeſs that I cannot think too ill of Lord Glanville."

"You

"You have impoſed upon me a very difficult taſk," replied the venerable counſellor. "My ſacred office calls upon me to abhor ſin wherever I ſee it; but it alſo bids me unite with that abhorrence my moſt earneſt endeavours to reclaim the offender. I am not an apologiſt for Lord Glanville's offences. The ſteps that I took to reſtore Miſs Aubrey's repreſentative to her juſt rights will ſhew you the point of view in which I regard her ſeducer. I will farther own, that I have had many reaſons to think your delineation of Lord Glanville's character correct. But pardon me if I reprove you for exaggerating its dark ſhades, inſtead of endeavouring to ſoften them. The hand of a child ſhould rather be employed in throwing a veil over a father's ſhame, than in pointing it out to general obſervation. The rule of conduct which, with defective ability, yet with humble ſincerity

of heart, I attempt to follow, prescribes duty to a parent as a positive injunction, no way dependent on the inherent qualities of the person who has a natural right to claim it. Christianity also requires us to return good for evil, to be ready at all times to renounce our wishes, in order to promote the good of others; and it requires us to distinguish carefully between aversion to sin and personal enmity to an offender. Your discernment, madam, must convince you how admirably these rules are adapted to the idea which our holy faith presents us, of the nature of fallen, dependent, peccable, and finite man. You will allow that they are designed to strengthen the bond of social union, by teaching us to sympathize in the frailty of our common nature, while they enjoin a most watchful attention to our own conduct. Lord Glanville is, indeed, very faulty; but are we innocent? For myself,

ſelf, I cannot throw a ſtone. I am conſcious that in the conteſt I had with him, while I was endeavouring to reſtore Sophia to her birthright, I was ſometimes hurried on by reſentment, and ſometimes ſtimulated by ambition. Even now, while with partial kindneſs you pronounced my panegyric, I felt the dangerous inticement of vanity impelling me to an unwarrantable confidence in my own deſert. Warned by this recent example, ſuffer me Lady Caroline to ſay, that the wiſeſt courſe is, to fix our eyes upon our own conduct, and to regard that of others no farther than as we have power to correct and amend it; or to preſerve ourſelves and our fellow-creatures from the baleful effects of vice, either when it operates by ſecret treachery, open hoſtility, or pernicious example. Let us be careful to do what is right; we ſhall not anſwer for the ſins of others. One word more, dear lady: ſurely

ſurely even moral prudence bids us beware of puniſhing ourſelves, by way of ſhewing our enemies that we dare be revengeful."

Lady Caroline pauſed.

"Are theſe," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "the tenets of a faith which I have been taught to conſider as broaching contradictory doctrines, and inforcing impracticable morals? I have been told, that Chriſtianity was the fabrication of ambitious men who ſought to erect an enormous ſyſtem of peculation and prieſtly government on the credulity of the ignorant multitude; and that, in order to conſolidate their uſurpation, the clergy uniformly inſiſted on duties ſo inimical to the common affairs of life, and to the general views of mankind, that they required a previous renunciation of all temporal purſuits, as an initiatory ſtep, without which it was impoſſible to have any chance of a happy futurity. Does

Mr.

Mr. Brudenell's compendium of Chriſtian morals accord with the expoſitions that I have heard of that famous text, "Ye cannot ſerve God and mammon?" He ſeems to pay attention to *expedience* and worldly polity; at leaſt his tenets coincide with an enlightened view of civil ſociety, and the intricacies of the human character."

I will not accompany Lady Caroline through the train of her muſings. Thought is volatile, uncircumſcribed, and impetuous in its evolutions; and Lady Caroline alternately felt offended, reproved, and delighted. Now perſuaded that Mr. Brudenell had gloſſed over the abſurdities of his ſyſtem; now convinced that his nature was too ingenuous to affect belief, while he *doubted* in his heart. She at laſt reſolved to admit religion to a full impartial hearing, by paying as much attention to the repreſentations of its ſincere friend, as ſhe had done

done to the falſe gloſſes of its adverſaries, or to the mis-ſtatements of ſome well-intentioned but injudicious advocates. But, like the alarmed but irreſolute Felix, ſhe deferred this examination to a more "*convenient ſeaſon.*"

But, though ſhe poſtponed her acceptance of the cordial of immortality which this kind phyſician of ſouls was eager to preſent, ſhe continued anxious to retain his favour.—"You have degraded me in my own eyes," ſaid ſhe to Mr. Brudenell; "and I will own, ſelf-humiliation is to me both a *new* and a *painful* ſenſation. You ſeem to think it wholeſome, and I will try to endure it. I cannot, however, let it be accompanied with the certainty that I have forfeited your eſteem; you muſt therefore act up to your own precepts, and mingle chaſtiſement with benignity to the offender. I ſee that I have acted very wrong; yet while I find myſelf involved in the conſequences

ſequences of my own faults, I am not mean nor envious. I rejoice in Sophia's *brighter* proſpects. I yield her the fortune to which I conſidered myſelf heireſs, without feeling any diminution of my affection for her. I will mention too (for, perhaps, it is only in my preſent train of thought that I can ſpeak of myſelf without impropriety) a renunciation ſtill more difficult to a *female* mind: I ſaw the attentions of the amiable Selborne to her without envy, and I rejoiced at my fair friend's conqueſt at the very inſtant that I felt the *infinite* inferiority of my own admirer."

"O, Lady Caroline!" returned Mr. Brudenell, "how noble is your native ſelf! But even the richeſt ſoil requires careful cultivation."

"We will talk farther on this ſubject," ſaid Lady Caroline, riſing. "I ſee the point to which you would lead me, and will endeavour to determine

as

as you would wiſh. I ſay nothing to you on the ſubject of ſecreſy; for, though you learned my ſituation without my intending that you ſhould, I know you will not betray me. But tell me, does Sophia know my folly? Do I alſo look meanly in her eyes?"

Mr. Brudenell aſſured her that no one but himſelf knew of her interview with Raymond; and, after a deep ſigh, Lady Caroline retired; aſſuring him that he ſhould ſoon hear farther from her on this ſubject.

## CHAP. XVII.

*The Politics of FitzJohn Place continue in Oppoſition to thoſe of Glanville Caſtle.*

ON leaving Mr. Brudenell, Lady Caroline determined to enter upon an immediate ſcrutiny of her own heart; for, while ſhe liſtened to his precepts, ſhe thought nothing could be more glaring than the abſurdity of encouraging the addreſſes of a man who was little more than indifferent to her, for the ſake of mortifying her father. She reſolved to aſk herſelf theſe ſerious queſtions: "Could I paſs my life happily with Raymond? Are his temper, character, habits, and taſte, ſo congenial to my own as to render a union with him *neceſſary* to

to my peace?" Theſe inquiries led her to ponder on the character of her adorer; and, though her ladyſhip had enough of the romantic to feel little doubt of the exiſtence of pure diſintereſted paſſion in what others would think very ſuſpicious circumſtances, ſhe could not help owning that, in the preſent caſe, if her perſon had been more like Hecate than Hebe, it was very *poſſible* for a younger brother to fall in love with the reputed heireſs of eight thouſand a year. The reputed heireſs—thoſe words ſuggeſted a project; and ſhe determined to put Mr. Raymond's attachment to the teſt, by aſſuring him that ſhe was precluded from inheriting the Glanville fortune.

Projects are generally unfortunate things to young ladies. Indeed I have a general diſlike to them; and I have ſo often ſeen the quickneſs of female feeling betray the moſt profound ſcheme of female ſubtlety, that I have never regretted our

exclusion

exclufion from political rights, though fome of my fifter authors have lamented it with pathetic and fomewhat acrimonious fufceptibility. I am, indeed, convinced that a *female* parliament would not only (to ufe a quaint phrafe) be continually flying off in a tangent, but that a *female* adminiftration would be fo foon out-generalled by a *male* oppofition, that it is not worth while to ftruggle for a fupremacy which we want circumfpection to render permanent. And, fince unfuccefsful refiftance always incurs the odious name of rebellion, it is perhaps the wifeft courfe to conform to the long eftablifhed treaty which has fubfifted between us and our prefent governors (though fome of the articles are certainly inconvenient), left we fhould, by an ill-concerted infurrection, give them a plea for ftricter coercion. My fair readers may be affured that, though I make this free ftatement of my

my opinion, I ſhall not omit to put in a ſaving clauſe in favour of our right to *remonſtrate*, which is a very ancient branch of the female prerogative, and cannot be given up.

To apply theſe obſervations to private life: I am ſo thoroughly convinced of the general unfitneſs of my ſex for any thing that wears the appearance of plot, chicanery, and deep deſign, that I would ſtrongly adviſe my fair readers never to have recourſe to ſuch ſurreptitious aſſiſtance, but to reſt their actions on the firm baſis of integrity, candour, and generous frankneſs; with this ſole reſervation, that they put theſe noble qualities under the guidance of diſcretion. An artful woman is a monſter, and generally a fool. I would particularly adviſe all *ſpinſters* under the age of five and twenty never to attempt to outwit a lover who is not fairly turned of his grand climacteric. If he be, I not only allow

allow that amorous threeſcore and ten is fair game, but that it is eaſily caught, even by the ſimplicity of eighteen, and generally without any aſſiſtance from the lady mother: it is, therefore, lawful to turn it to the beſt advantage.

To return to my narrative: As Lady Caroline conceived it impoſſible that Raymond ſhould know any thing of her claims to the Lewſon property, ſhe thought his diſintereſtedneſs was fairly put to the teſt, by informing him that ſhe was not the *heireſs* of the Glanville fortune. Now, though this intelligence ſomewhat chilled the ardour of Raymond's attachment, yet after a little ſtruggle the tender flame revived with all its wonted fury. He had, indeed, a deeper knowledge of the fortune-hunter's arithmetic than his charmer ſuppoſed; and, after an exact calculation, he diſcovered that it was at leaſt ten to one againſt his ſecuring a better match; for I muſt obſerve, that this

acute inquirer knew the contents of Lord Lewſon's will to a tittle, and even the funds in which his fortune was depoſited.

His anſwer to the Lady was of courſe full of joy, rapture, hope, and eternal love. Now that the immenſe and ſoul-appalling difference between them was removed, he felt authorized to talk of his own proſpects. Had he detailed theſe at length, they would have ſtretched out like the royal line of Banquo, and perhaps with as viſionary an aſpect. They conſiſted in the firm friendſhip of Lord Phantome, the gratitude of the Marquis of Lethe, the reiterated promiſes of Sir Tittup Cantwell, and a chance of ſucceeding to old Scapegrace's fortune, againſt which latter poſſibility nothing could be urged but that old Scapegrace was in perfect ſubmiſſion to his houſekeeper, and ſo fond of her ſeven children, that he called them his own dear little darlings. As an enu-

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meration of theſe proſpects would have had an ungenteel air in a love-letter, Mr. Raymond ſupplied them by this well-turned paragraph:

"And now, deareſt Lady Caroline, generous as you are, you muſt ſuffer me to talk of my numerous, powerful, and zealous friends; of my noble and extenſive connexions; of my wealthy and affectionate relations. Your goodneſs, O moſt divine of women! makes me feel proud and humble too; for, while I boaſt that your eſteem is my chief diſtinction, never was man more favoured than I have been by *general* eſteem. I will not any longer offend the active zeal of thoſe who love me. I will not wound their tenderneſs by indulging the rigid dignity of independence, and the lofty pride of virtue. I will condeſcend to let them ſerve me; and when their efforts have placed me in that ſtation for which *they* have long thought me qualified, I will *demand* from the proud

earl of Glanville his daughter, rich in native excellence, though poor in the ſordid comprehenſion of vulgar minds."

Though Lady Caroline was ſuperior to common-place flattery, ſhe really thought ſome parts of Raymond's letter extremely ſtriking. Our views of wealth are all comparative; and ſhe had been ſo long uſed to contemplate her reverſionary right to immenſe riches, that forty thouſand pounds ſeemed to her ſcarcely worth valuing. Beſides, like moſt young people bred to the enjoyment of all the luxuries that unbounded affluence can purchaſe, ſhe not only under-rated their importance to her own happineſs, but had a very indefinite conception of the value of money. She had often ſeen people of ſmall fortunes with large families make a genteel appearance, and ſeem eaſy and comfortable; and ſhe had never endeavoured to peep behind that curtain which prudence draws over

domeſtic

domeſtic inquietude. She never reflected on the many heart-aches that muſt attend an improvident dilation of the purſe, nor conſidered that *external ſhow* muſt, in ſuch circumſtances, be ſupported at the expence of *internal quiet*. Her favourite ſtudies furniſhed her with many a philoſophic rant againſt wealth; and, without conſidering that theſe philippics ſmelt ſtrongly of diſappointment and diſcontent, ſhe lolled upon her downy couch, and raved againſt the anxious ſolicitude of the worldling.

With regard to rank, her ideas were not quite ſo abſtracted. She ſaw that it was allowed as a paſſport to conſequence; but the diſtinction of perſonal merit was moſt gratifying to her natural vanity and acquired prejudices. She had ſpent moſt of her life on the continent. She had ſeen empires and ſtates

ſuddenly overwhelmed, and hereditary fortunes involved in public ruin. Amidſt this general wreck, genius alone ſeemed to have power to brave the ſtorm; or, rather, ſo to direct the jarring elements as to make them inſtrumental in conducting it to the deſired haven. At preſent ſhe had ſeen little of Engliſh ſociety; and from that little was led to doubt whether it had not ſtill too ariſtocratic a tendency, to allow that diſtinction to ſuperior talent, merely from admiration of its powers, which the convulſed ſtate of affairs abroad permitted men of abilities to *obtain*. Here, then, were two points which ſhe reſolved to inveſtigate the enſuing winter; namely, whether Mr. Raymond's pretenſions to intellectual pre-eminence were real, and whether thoſe claims were *generally* allowed.

Let us leave Lady Caroline in this humour, and repair to FitzJohn Place,

where

where it may be expected that black despair and disappointment reigned. To add to all the mischances of the ball, Lady FitzJohn had adopted the opinion, that this strange miss, whom nobody knew, and every body liked, was intentionally a rival to Melisandriania. She observed, that Sophia spoke to Lord Glanville several times in the course of the evening, which, according to her view of affairs, was abominably forward; and so she hoped the earl thought; for she heard him answer her in that laconic querulous style which very high-bred gentlemen use to their own family, or to people that they don't care about. Lady Caroline, indeed, seemed very fond of this miss; but Lady Caroline was —— I think it prudent not to fill up this hiatus, especially when I inform my readers, that Lady FitzJohn had now positively determined, that this most malicious of daughters not

not only ſaw and oppoſed her father's attachment, but abſolutely introduced this humble couſin, to uſe her own words, to ſet her cap at the old man, and do as her miſtreſs bade her. Meliſandriania, ſhe obſerved, had too much good ſenſe to be ſo docile; but, as this baſe attempt of Lady Caroline's "to break the lily band of plighted love" called for condign puniſhment, Lady FitzJohn was reſolved to inflict it.

The breakfaſt party aſſembled at a late hour the morning after the gala; and Sir Bronze, who really was perfectly ſober, felt a little doubtful whether he did not "out-Herod Herod" in his extravagancies the preceding evening. But the lovely Meliſandriania ſoon prevented the intruſion of that caſt-off acquaintance called Modeſty, with whom, many years ago, Sir Bronze had a moſt *irreconcileable* quarrel, by playing off a little adroit flattery in a

*neat*

*neat* manner. She called the breaking open the closet door a *delightful explosion*, and affirmed that the ladies were almost convulsed with laughter, when, on the waiter's bringing him lemonade instead of champagne, he tossed the liquor as neatly into the fellow's gaping mouth, as if he had done it with a pop-gun. Sir Bronze, though he did not admire the pop-gun, was really glad of a little praise; and a very promising flirtation commenced, which drew many significant nods and smiles from her ladyship, and one dolorous "humph!" from Sir Peter. As to Mr. Artremidorus, the part that he played on these occasions was uniform. Unless he fortunately met with an opportunity of *shining*, by execrating the muffins, confounding the chocolate, or emptying the contents of the tea-pot into the slop-basin, with a protestation that it was too infernally

nauſeous, he contented himſelf with picking his teeth, or rolling with his two pointers on the chintz ſofa.

"But, dear Sir Bronze," exclaimed Lady FitzJohn after a long continued he! he! he! and a declaration that ſhe ſeldom laughed, but really his wit was inſufferable; "Do you know any thing of that Miſs Herbert? I thought her rather an *odd*-looking girl."

"A mere *twaddle*," returned Sir Bronze, who readily adopted the proper cue. "She *daſhed* a little laſt autumn at Bath, but nobody minded her. Oh yes: faith my memory is ſo deviliſh bad, there was an old fellow on two crutches, a Sir——plague on't I can't think of theſe Welſh baronets. Oh, Sir William Evans. He uſed to put on his *green* ſpectacles, and look at her; but the thing did not take; yet I can't ſay it was the girl's fault."

"Oh,"

"Oh," ſaid Lady FitzJohn, "how ſoon you men of true faſhion find out forward girls. So ſhe could not catch old Sir Taffy after all? Well it is ſo unmeaſurably comical. But I doubt whether Miſs will have better ſucceſs with her preſent flame."

"Who's that?" inquired Sir Bronze. "Upon my ſoul, Lady FitzJohn, you quite terrify me. I think hanging and marrying juſt alike; and if this enterprizing lady has any deſigns upon *me*, ſpeak—quick—by all our friendſhip, I'll order my curricle, and drive to the antipodes in an inſtant."

"Or to the devil ſooner than be married," re-echoed Mr. Artremidorus.

"Oh fye, Artre, my dear," returned her ladyſhip very gravely. "You always will go *too far* a great deal. Though, I own, girls of this age are ſo brought up, that they deter *prudent* men from marrying. I ſaw the evil of this

this cuſtom, ſo educated Meliſandriania myſelf, under my own eye; and I am ſure ſhe has not *one* idea that I did not inculcate. But I believe, Sir Bronze, you need not be alarmed about this Miſs Herbert. That is to ſay, I mean, not juſt yet. Your turn may be next for any thing I know; but at preſent, I find, ſhe ſtrikes at an earl. Pray did you mind when Meliſandriania fainted, how ſhe ſtepped up to Lord Glanville, with a "I hope you are not hurt, Sir?" I bluſhed at her impudence I vow; and I thought ſhe might have had more humanity *too*, for there was my timid love fainting, and nobody to catch her if ſhe fell: for his lordſhip ſtood looking at her, ſo affected, that he had not power to ſtir."

"You forget," ſaid Sir Bronze with a loud laugh, "that I was cloſeted when the fiddlers turned tumblers."

"O dear Sir Bronze!" exclaimed Melifandriania, "don't mention the clofet again, if you have any love for me, or I fhall die of laughing."

Lady FitzJohn gently ftruck her daughter's elbow, by way of a maternal check; and turning to Sir Bronze, who feemed a little aftonifhed, obferved, that this was all pure nature. "The moft undefigning creature in the world," continued fhe. "But I want to hear more about Mifs Herbert. Does any body know what fhe is, or who fhe is? No fortune I fuppofe?"

"She does not look like a girl of fortune," replied Sir Bronze; "but I don't know how it was, there was a fort of talk that fhe would be fomebody fome time or other. A confufed tale about her being related to a lord, who had *reafons* for not owning her."

"I underftand you," faid Lady FitzJohn nodding. "Pray, Sir Bronze, don't

don't ſpeak any plainer.—Meliſandriania, love, take your harp; you know you are always *miſerable* when you are not at your muſic.—I ſend her away, Sir," whiſpering the baronet, "becauſe ſhe is the moſt *delicate* creature in the world; the leaſt blunt expreſſion *diſtreſſes* her. But as to Miſs Herbert, I have ſuch an utter averſion to *ſuch ſort* of doings, that I think people of *that ſort* never ſhould come into company. But you know Lady Caroline is ſo wiſe, and enlightened in her own *conceit*, that to be ſure one muſt not direct *her*, elſe I would ſay *people* of Miſs Herbert's deſcription are not fit company for honeſtly-born young ladies. Don't you think ſo, Sir Bronze?"

Sir Bronze was relieved from the trouble of anſwering this harangue, by Artremidorus declaring, with a loud yawn, that they were ſpending the morn-

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ing in a confoundedly ſtupid manner. A ſpirited debate enſued between the gentlemen, which, as it conſiſted of very little beſide faſhionable oaths and cant phraſes, I will not tranſcribe. Though the fair Meliſandriania continued to "ſtrike the warbling wire," with (at leaſt in her own opinion) the beauty, grace, and execution of a Cecilia, her barbarous brother bore off the baronet, to witneſs the rapturous enjoyments of a cock-fight.

"I declare he grows more and more brutiſh every day, and I hate him worſe and worſe," cried the fair enraged muſician, ſtepping from her harp the moment Sir Bronze was out of hearing, and following him with her ſtraining eyes from the window. I wonder if it is the faſhion for brothers to be ſo rude."

"Yes," ſaid Lady FitzJohn, "all the ſtyliſh men that I know behave like boors

boors to their ſiſters. Don't mind it, love; for, you know, Artre will get elevated after dinner; and then, if Sir Bronze be ſober, you may ſing and play to *him* all the evening. But I have juſt made a great diſcovery. As ſure as you are alive, Miſs Herbert is nothing but a baſe-born brat of Lord Glanville's, and I am aſtoniſhed that Lady Caroline can ſeem to be fond of her."

"Oh mamma!" returned Miſs Fitz-John, "it came in two winters ago for very high ladies to ſtand godmothers to the natural children of all their relations. Lady Random topped the faſhion; for ſhe was ſo fond of a little odious thing of her huſband's, that ſhe dreſſed it in a Circaſſian dreſs, and made it ſit by her croſs-legged on the ſofa, with a white turban on; and if any body aſked her who the pretty creature was, ſhe always anſwered, "Only a little miſtake of Sir Peregrine's."

"Aye,"

"Aye," ſaid Lady FitzJohn, "I thought Lady Caroline had ſome authority for her whims. I don't mind this Miſs Herbert now, for ſhe cannot ſtand in your light, you know."

"La, mamma! I wiſh you would not keep talking to me about that ugly old man. He is ſo gloomy, and ſo ſolemn, and as Sir Bronze ſays, ſuch a moving mountain of miſery, that I declare even dancing with him gave me the vapours, and I could not look up again the whole evening."

"To be ſure, child," reſumed Lady FitzJohn, "he is but a diſagreeable ſort of a man; but then that will be of no conſequence, only juſt during courtſhip; for after you are married you will ſee very little of my lord, you know. Not but that I hope you will make a very prudent wife, and I dare ſay you will be quite exemplary in your beha-

viour.

viour. I would not, however, have you over-obſervant neither; for you muſt go out, my dear, when you are a counteſs, to keep up your connexions, and to ſhew your equipage, and for your health's ſake, and to prevent being low-ſpirited; and if my lord can't go with you, why he muſt ſtay at home, you know. And ſo I hope you will go on very well, till the dear dead old man ſets you quite at liberty; and then, who knows? you may have a ſecond chance for Sir Bronze."

"Oh, Sir Bronze never will marry me when I am old and ugly."

"Dear love, what can make you ſo low? though, to be ſure, the Madona look does become you. Try it on Sir Bronze this afternoon; for I would not have you break with him, till you are quite ſure of my lord. But, as I was obſerving, if you ſhould be counteſs of Glanville, and if the earl ſhould die,—

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we will give him ſeven years.—No, ſtay—ſeven years is too long. I think the chances are in your favour that you will be a widow in five. I think my lord is about ſeventy. Seventy and eighteen—I would not have you accept of one farthing leſs than four thouſand a year jointure, and you muſt have a thouſand a year pin-money."

"Oh good gracious!" interrupted the young lady, "do you think my lord would give me four thouſand a year? Why it is more than Sir Bronze is worth!"

The appearance of Sir Peter put an end to this converſation; and Lady FitzJohn ordered her chariot, for the double purpoſe of returning thanks to the ladies who had honoured her with their company, and of traducing the birth, parentage, and education of Sophia.

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Every body recollects the reaſon of Lady Bluemantle's morning travels: Lady FitzJohn's were rather ſimilar. At the firſt place ſhe called at, ſhe pitied poor Lady Caroline, for being compelled to aſſociate with her father's illegitimate child. At the next, ſhe extolled her ladyſhip's generoſity, in raiſing the poor thing from obſcurity. At the third, ſhe congratulated the neighbourhood on the *honourable* addition that Lord Glanville had introduced; and at the fourth, ſhe obliquely hinted, that, though ſome people were very compaſſionate to *thoſe ſort* of beings, for her own part ſhe had a ſtrong perſuaſion that virtues and vices were hereditary, and that the young lady commonly behaved as "mamma had done before her." Sophia's efforts to draw in a Welſh baronet, whoſe name Lady FitzJohn *prudently* forgot, were conſtantly mentioned with vari-

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ations and amplifications; an attempt was made to implicate Mr. Brudenell in the charge of aſſiſting the ſchemes of a female adventurer; and the narrative always concluded with the intelligence, that theſe people had made themſelves ſo notorious at Bath, that a friend of hers, a very pleaſant young man, and one who lived much in the great world, was quite terrified when he heard that Miſs Herbert was come into that neighbourhood; proteſting that ſhe was ſuch a determined general in the matrimonial line, that when once ſhe laid ſiege, ſap, ſtratagem, and aſſault were all at once applied to force a ſpeedy ſurrender, and you muſt either ſound a parley or make a ſpeedy retreat.

I need not add that all theſe communications were made under the ſtrict ſeal of ſecreſy, which was as faithfully preſerved as ſuch covenants uſually are.

A very

A very delightful buſtle enſued in the neighbourhood. In proportion to the degree of credulity in the hearers of the ſtory, the circulation increaſed, the narrative varied, and the wonder magnified; till at laſt the original ſtory grew ſo inextricably involved, that even ſcandal was aſhamed of it, and, after having been in entire poſſeſſion of Sophia's ſecret hiſtory, was forced to confeſs that it was all a miſtake, for that nothing could be ſaid of her materially to her diſadvantage.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*An odd Medley. Politics reſorted to as a Noſtrum for the Spleen. A Lady loſes her Heart, while the Winner ſeems looking another Way.*

As I affect originality, I muſt often claim a licence to tranſgreſs the eſtabliſhed rules of novel compoſition. I here give public notice, that it is not my intention to recapitulate minutely all that my heroes and heroines ſay, do, and think *every* day, during that period of their lives which I take upon me to chronicle with fidelity. With all due reſpect to my contemporaries, I give it as my opinion, that ſince in the ordinary occurrences of life, and in common conver-

verſation, very illuſtrious perſonages appear but like other people, it would be adviſable for all annaliſts, eſpecially *female* ones, to ſtudy the art of abridgment and compreſſion; at this particular time, when the *ſcarcity* of paper ſo ill accords with the *exuberance* of genius. I had once a ſcheme to recommend myſelf to the public as a profeſſor in the art of brevity; and as I found that by leaving out all extraneous matter, ſuch as unconnected epiſodes, abuſe on governments, ſarcaſms on religion, philoſophical, geographical, botanical, aſtronomical, chemical, and all other digreſſions, which are introduced with the ſole view of ſhewing the writer's profound knowledge; together with all deſcriptions of dreſs, all very tender love-ſcenes, and every adventure that does not abſolutely tend to further the progreſs of the principal ſtory or to impreſs ſome uſeful precept; finding, I repeat, that

that I could, by ſuch a uſe of my ſciſſars, contract many a modern Iliad till I could cram it into a nutſhell, I did expect the applauſe of all muſlin-miſſes and pink-ſlippered beaux, who live upon the food of circulating libraries, and of courſe ſwallow a great deal of unwholeſome and undigeſtible traſh. But, having diſcovered that the ravenous appetite of theſe literati is more ſolicitous about the *quantity* than the *quality* of their nouriſhment, I began to fear that theſe Maximii in learning would not thank me for reducing their ſuſtenance to the ſcanty portion of a little good ſenſe; for, though I know they conſtantly complain that their repaſts are too ſubſtantial, or, rather, too long, yet I am now convinced that the tedium of unemployed time would, to vacant minds, be ſtill more inſupportable. I therefore renounce my Quixote ſcheme of effecting

a general reformation, and will confine myſelf to the beſt way of removing every evil, I mean by ſetting an excellent example. My brevity ſhall form as ſtriking a contraſt to the copiouſneſs of my ſcribbling ſiſters, as my dignified modeſty does to their egotiſm. Let other authoreſſes force their own adventures and characters on the public eye; Mrs. Prudentia Homeſpun, with the delicate propriety of real genius, will ——But, fearful of incurring the charge of inconſiſtency, I will truſt to the affection of my readers to fill up this blank with propriety. As this chapter is intended to comprize ſome *months* of narrative, I truſt that I ſhall at leaſt eſcape the cenſure of prolixity. Though Lord Glanville had received a ſummons to attend the meeting of parliament, and though political importance was his firſt wiſh, he continued to reſide at his caſtle.

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He was as yet unable to reſolve on the manner in which he ſhould introduce Sophia to the world, being fearful of the inquiries that her appearance muſt excite, and the rumours which it might revive. He was alſo alarmed with the apprehenſion that the fatigue of legiſlative attendance, and the diſſipation incident to a town-life, might injure his declining health; which was by this time become ſo much affected, that he could no longer refer his painful ſenſations to cold eaſt winds, damps, or indeed any other cauſes than ſecret diſcontent, preying on feeble age, and unawakened conſcience diſcloſing to the *would-be* infidel the evidences of a future world.

To theſe motives for remaining in the country, others were oppoſed which ſtrongly induced him to haſten to London. It had long been his deſign to beſtow his daughter in marriage on a

young nobleman who was confidered as the leading character in oppofition; and, as the inducement of a large fortune and extenfive connexions muft, he well knew, operate upon the heart of the intended lover, he did not doubt of his joyfully acceding to the fcheme, provided he could bring the parties to a *previous* interview: but the difficulty was, how to manage with Lady Caroline. Raymond continued at W——, with no other motive for ftaying, but that of being near his miftrefs, and openly boafting of her preference, which indeed fhe took no pains to conceal, at leaft from her father's eye. She knew, indeed, that this behaviour gave him the fevereft uneafinefs; but virtue is not to turn out of its fteady courfe in compliance with the weaknefs of others; and to two virtues that ftand very high in the new fchool of ethics, Lady Caroline was particularly partial: I mean ingenuoufnefs

nuousness and independence. Lest my readers should be puzzled about the actions of these gentry, I will just add, that they were the old vices of stubbornness and effrontery, with *modernized* titles.

Never was philosophical father more grievously perplexed than poor Lord Glanville, to discover the best means of counteracting the propensities which he had so tenderly cherished. As he could not deny his daughter's natural right to bestow herself on whom she pleased, he could not plead a necessity for paternal interposition, even though he should only mean to snatch her from a most undeserving object, and to save her from misery and shame. Indeed, he had often hinted that paternal authority is a non-entity, or at best but an expedient tie; and when expedience is admitted as the rule of action between two people, each party may give their own

own interpretation to a vague, indefinite term; and certainly four-and-twenty, and ſixty-eight, are not likely to form correſponding ideas on the ſubject of love and marriage. To talk about expedience, therefore, was uſing a language that ſhe could not be expected to underſtand.

Perſuaſion might do ſome good. Lady Caroline's temper, though warm and impetuous, was generous and affectionate to thoſe whom ſhe loved. But perſuaſion was not Lord Glanville's forte. 'Tis true, he piqued himſelf upon his knowledge of character, and his art in managing his fellow-creatures; but his pride and his prejudices often defeated his deſigns, and he ſeldom flattered till it was too late to cajole. Intimidation was hopeleſs; he had already ſeen, by his daughter's generous affection for Sophia, that pecuniary motives had no influence on her paſſions; and,

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as ſhe was aſſured of the poſſeſſion of Lord Lewſon's fortune, the loſs of the little her father *could* give her would not be worth one moment's conſideration.

To what method then could the unhappy Lord Glanville have recourſe, except to his own favourite ſyſtem of diſguiſe? But were he to invite Raymond to the caſtle, affect to be pleaſed with his ſociety, and even to ſmile upon his pretenſions to Lady Caroline, his lordſhip feared that he had already diſſembled too much to deceive his daughter, as to the real motive for his change of conduct. A new conqueſt ſeemed the only reſource; and for this London was certainly the proper ſphere. He knew enough of the world to know that wherever Lady Caroline came ſhe muſt be admired; and he knew that when admiration was directed to the perſon of a rich heireſs, matrimonial offers would follow of courſe: but, as choice

 generally

generally perplexes, he wiſhed that offer to be firſt made which he intended her to accept.

The ſchemes of his own future greatneſs, which, as I have before obſerved, were combined with the diſpoſal of Lady Caroline, would have better ſuited the heyday of vigorous life, than a broken mind and a debilitated body. But it was Lord Glanville's deſtiny, to be always haraſſed by a craving for ſomething that he could not attain. Anxious to be thought a great man, yet neglecting whatever would have made him truly deſerving of that character, he felt impatient to loſe reflection in the buſtle and turmoil of public affairs. Retirement had been to him what the fountain was to Narciſſus; it had enabled him to contemplate his own portrait: but in this his lordſhip was no coxcomb; for he was ſo little ſatisfied with himſelf, that

that he never wiſhed to take another glance. Sarcaſtic obſervers have remarked, that this is the beſt ſtate of mind for the formation of the patriotic principle; as you never can be ſo keen-ſighted reſpecting the faults of your rulers, as when you are thoroughly conſcious of your own. Nay I have heard it affirmed, that the zeal of a national reformer is amazingly increaſed, by his being convinced that in the preſent ſtate of things the only *elevated* ſituation for which he can hope, is a *certain unenviable exaltation*, that will only give him *one* opportunity of attracting the public notice. As I diſclaim the character of a political ſatiriſt, I will not determine how many of the Catos and *Brutuſes* of the preſent day have been ſtimulated by the *above motive* to extraordinary exertions to procure celebrity. I will only obſerve, that in proportion as Lord Glanville ſaw his own depravity and con-

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temptiblenefs as a *man*, he was impatient to obtain eclat and reputation as a *party-leader*.

Determined to commence his political career by a powerful and violent oppofition; during his refidence at Glanville-caftle he practifed all thofe arts which lead to popularity and confequence. With a view to the nomination of reprefentatives to the borough of W——, he courted the FitzJohns; and, maugre all the feelings of wounded delicacy or offended pride, added to the painful fenfations of infirm health, he regularly attended all the *corporation* dinners, and bowling meetings; nor did one complaining figh or farcaftic fmile efcape him. So humble were his bows, fo fmooth his addrefs, fo bland his manners, that he felt confident of fuccefs; and when his ever-perturbed thoughts recalled the offences of his paft life, and combined with them his prefent certainty

tainty of decay, he ſtrove to exorciſe the buſy ſpirits that haunted his imagination, by inviting the mayor and corporation of W—— to his caſtle, and liſtening to their eulogiums on his *virtues* and *importance*.

But Lord Glanville is not the only great man who has over-rated his own conſequence, nor the only courtier who has been ſo very "obliging that he never obliged." A few good *actions* tell better than an infinitude of good *ſpeeches*; and, however meanly we may judge of the underſtandings of our inferiors, they have generally diſcernment enough to diſcover the tendency of overdone complaiſance. If we would ſmile with effect, we muſt beware of *ſuſpicious* ſmiles.

While Lord Glanville thus endeavoured to combat with the reproaches of conſcience and the advanced guards of the King of Terrors, by indulging in

in airy dreams of future greatneſs, Lord Selborne contrived to gain an introduction to the Caſtle, where he ſoon became a frequent and not unwelcome gueſt. In compliance with the requeſt of an uncle, whoſe perſon he loved, and whoſe judgment he revered, he had turned his attention to the amiable grand-daughter of a man whom he knew by common report to be one who was an honour to the human character. I know that it is contrary to all the laws of novel writing to aſſign a dutiful or even a *prudential* reaſon for the commencement of a hero's attachment, who ought to plunge ſlap-daſh into love, without any demur about whys or wherefores, I rather think I ought to feel a little aſhamed of the Goth that I am going to introduce, when I am obliged to allow, that Lord Selborne did not ſuppoſe the virtues and graces of Sophia *diminiſhed*, by her being pointed

pointed out to him, by a relation on whom he had a confiderable dependence, as an object worthy his matrimonial choice. How it could happen I cannot conceive; but he certainly became fo much in love with her, that what was at firft acquiefcence with prudential and grateful motives, foon became the chief wifh of his heart. He feized an early opportunity to acquaint Mr. Brudenell, on whom he fuppofed his charmer folely depended, that the triumph of mild wit and modeft beauty was complete; and he urged him to that lively mediation in his behalf which Sir William Evans had requefted his old friend to ufe, in cafe Lord Selborne fhould be as deeply fenfible of Sophia's merits as the good baronet earneftly hoped he would be. He now heard, with that pleafure which refults from a laudable thirft for valuable praife, Mr. Brudenell exprefs his approbation of his fuit.—" I will not," faid

ſaid the good man with characteriſtic frankneſs, " diſguiſe my ardent wiſh to intruſt my darling child to the care of a worthy huſband. I have hitherto been her only protector; but, my lord, according to the courſe of nature, I muſt ſoon reſign that office; and ſome circumſtances that I am not at liberty to explain, excite in my mind an apprehenſion for her future tranquillity, which ſometimes exceeds the limits that religion inſtructs us to impoſe on our *temporal* ſolicitudes. For many reaſons I wiſh her yours. Yet, as a precipitate declaration might plunge you both into many and great perplexities, I ſay at preſent, be *only her friend.* Study her character, my lord; obſerve not only its general excellence, but even how far her virtues correſpond with your own. Permit her to have the ſame opportunities of obſerving and juſtly appreciating your merits; and if this mutual circum-

ſpection

ſpection confirms your mutual regard, your proſpect of future happineſs will be more ſecure than if your union reſulted from a haſty ſtart of feveriſh inclination. I think it my duty farther to inform you, that my ſanction alone is not ſufficient: Lord Glanville has a voice in the diſpoſal of Sophia. There is ſome cauſe to fear that his views may not correſpond with mine; and as his character is too myſterious for me to attempt a reciprocal frankneſs of communication, I dare not addreſs him on the ſubject. The progreſs that you may be able to make in his good opinion will tend to further your wiſhes."

If Lord Selborne perceived ſomething in the preceding converſation to awaken his fears, he ſaw more to encourage his hopes; eſpecially as Mr. Brudenell afterwards owned, that, when his clerical duties compelled him to leave Glanville caſtle, Sophia would need the encoura-

ging

ging preſence and kind advice of a faithful friend. Such an office ſuited the generous nature of Selborne's attachment. Eſteem and confidence are the baſis of friendſhip; and friendſhip between two amiable young people of different ſexes is ſo very like love, that I know not how to define the diſtinction. Sophia ſoon found herſelf uncomfortable, unleſs encouraged by the preſence of her *friend;* and he anticipated ſo many occaſions on which ſhe might want his aſſiſtance, that, like Titus, he thought the day loſt, if a part of it was not devoted to the ſervice of knight-errantry. Sophia was not ſo affectedly coquetiſh as to miſconſtrue his aſſiduities; nor did he miſinterpret the modeſt bluſh and timid ſmile by which the lovely maid rewarded them.

Lady Caroline perceived the attachment of theſe conſcious lovers; and, but for the perplexities of her own ſitua-

tion,

tion, ſhe would have rejoiced in the diſcovery, both as it gave her an opportunity of exerciſing her lively talents at raillery, and as ſhe felt truly ſolicitous for Sophia's happineſs. But when we ſo far deviate from moral rectitude, as to act upon a ſyſtem which our judgment condemns, we are not ſufficiently at eaſe to indulge the ebullitions of playful fancy; and, ſtrange as it may ſound, even the benevolent affections are weakened by our perſeverance in an erroneous ſyſtem of conduct. Her converſation with Mr. Brudenell had taught Lady Caroline to doubt the truth and practicability of that high ſyſtem of undeviating rectitude which ſhe had preſcribed to herſelf, or, to ſpeak more preciſely, as a rule by which ſhe determined to meet the actions of others, in order, if they fell ſhort of perfection, to excuſe herſelf for her own breaches of duty. She doubted whether Mr.

Brudenell's

Brudenell's precepts of returning good for evil, of being ſtrict in cenſuring our own faults while we are candid and compaſſionate to the failings of others, and, above all, of owning poſitive duties to various relations of life that cannot be *obviated* even by their unworthineſs, had not more of the air of true magnanimity, than that ſevere ſcheme of retributive juſtice under which ſhe had attempted to ſhelter her own refractory behaviour. She doubted, I ſay: but the natural pertinacity of her temper, that pride of reaſon which ſhe had been taught, not only to cheriſh, but to venerate with blind idolatry; theſe natural and acquired faults, aided by an obſtinate predilection for an unworthy object, prevented her from exchanging the pain of doubt, for the peaceful ſecurity of conviction and reformation. Diſſatisfied with herſelf, and at enmity with all around her, Lady Caroline generally ſup-

ſupported a forced gaiety for a few minutes, and then ſunk into the languor of penſive diſcontent, or degenerated into the petulance of ill-diſguiſed chagrin.

Lord Selborne's diſcernment enabled him to diſcover the ſecret workings of a perturbed ſpirit, and his humanity prompted him to endeavour to relieve it. His beloved Sophia, ever equable and gentle, preſented, to uſe the words of a favourite author, "only the mild green of the ſoul," on which the anxious ſpirit might peacefully repoſe. With a temper too amiable to be ruffled by ſlight provocations, a heart too benevolent to be engroſſed by ſelfiſh feelings, and principles and views too exalted to be ſhaken by the rude conflicts of theſe ſublunary elements, what bleſſings did ſuch a character promiſe to her wedded partner! How enchanting was her playful vivacity! how perſuaſive her unaſſuming

aſſuming ſenſe! how ſoothing her unaffected ſweetneſs! Elated by the flattering hope that his Sophia regarded him with preference, Selborne's heart overflowed with that general philanthropy and good-will which proſperity conſtantly produces in *generous* minds. Lady Caroline's ſuppreſſed ſighs, a peeviſhneſs which ſhe vainly attempted to diſguiſe, her fits of gloomy abſence, and tranſient burſts of ill-ſorted mirth, convinced him that ſhe was unhappy, and as an unhappy being he thought her entitled to his moſt reſpectful attentions.

Lord Glanville ſaw with pleaſure the young viſcount's efforts to divert his daughter's chagrin. Ignorant of the real motive which drew him to Glanville-caſtle, he imagined that Caroline was the powerful magnet; and, though a military and miniſterial ſon-in-law did not accord with his final views, he

thought

thought an agreeable nobleman in regimentals might prove an admirable lure to withdraw the wayward fair from her perverſe, attachment to a mere adventurer, and prepare her for the offers of the marquis of Montolieu, with whom he had already entered into a political correſpondence. It was to this young nobleman, who had recently come to the enjoyment of his paternal poſſeſſions and titles, that he deſtined the hand of that child whom, by ſome ſtrange error either in his own conduct or her compoſition, he found, inſtead of his comfort and ſolace, a laſting ſource of care and perplexity.

With reſpect to Sophia, the earl intended that ſhe ſhould dedicate her life to his ſervice. He found himſelf perfectly at eaſe with her. She bore his ill-humours with patience, accuſtomed herſelf to his habits, attached herſelf to his couch when he was unable to leave it,

it, and exerted herſelf to amuſe him whenever the ſtate of his mind and body permitted him a comparative degree of eaſe. Notwithſtanding the inſinuations of ſome pſeudo-moraliſts, this great maſter of the art of diſſimulation certainly found falſhood a *weariſome* employment; and he grew as heartily tired of acting the part of an indulgent happy father, as he had formerly been of performing the *farce* of an affectionate huſband. I would not have the reader ſuppoſe that theſe reflections are preparatory to the intelligence that Lord Glanville *transferred* his affections to his grand-daughter; that nobleman was incapable of affection; but, as people of his diſpoſition always want an object to whom they may vent their ſpleen, and diſcloſe the wounds of their lacerated minds, he found a convenience in the placid tenderneſs with which that amiable girl miniſtered to his ſorrows.

Leaving

Leaving Selborne to amuſe his wayward daughter, he would frequently require Sophia's attendance in his own apartment, where ſhe ſometimes lulled him to reſt with her harmonious voice, and at others amuſed him with an entertaining book, or patiently liſtened to his querulous exaggerated account of the injuries that he had ſuſtained from a baſe ungrateful world; for in that light it always appears to a man of the earl's character. Yet I muſt again repeat, and may the youthful ſinner attend to the awful warning! in thoſe *comparatively* happy moments Lord Glanville never knew more of delight and contentment than to *feel* his own irreparable loſs. The miſeries of accurſed beings are by ſome ſuppoſed to be increaſed by diſtant views of the manſions of the bleſſed; and as ſoon as the earl's agonized feelings began to ſubſide into ſocial pleaſure, when his heart ſeemed diſpoſed to cheriſh

cherifh thofe focial affections without which life is a burden, memory prefented him with her bitter beverage. The attitude, cadence, or fentiments of the *living* Sophia recalled the *loft* to his mind; and he frequently fent his comforter from him, fometimes with a complaint that his pains overpowered him, but oftener with a ftart of petulance, or paffionate reproach, unaccountable to all who have not attended to the caprices of a diftempered foul. My young readers will be defirous to know what paffed in Sophia's bofom on thefe occafions. They will unanimoufly agree, that it muft be very teazing to be taken from the fociety of an amiable and approved lover, and fubjected to the fplenetic extravagancies of a peevifh, wretched, unworthy old man. I fancy many of them would have determined to run away from Glanville-caftle, renounce their high expectations, and

ſhelter themſelves in the arms of fond affection; by which laſt ſentence I only mean that they would have returned to Mr. Brudenell; for I cannot ſuppoſe that any *gentle* nymph, who has kept *me* company through ſo many pages, could even for a moment cheriſh the idea of any other elopement. Others, probably, are now on tiptoe with expectation, hoping that I am going to introduce a croſs-purpoſe attachment, or at leaſt to enliven the flatneſs of this part of my narrative with a few ſmart ſcenes of female jealouſy.

In anſwer to theſe ſuggeſtions and hopes, I will, as my way is, deliver a moral precept. The mind that is ſtrictly guarded by a ſenſe of duty will at all times cheerfully ſubmit to what duty requires, and find not only comfort, but the pureſt pleaſures that earth beſtows, in fulfilling its allotted part. If Lord Glanville's behaviour ſometimes forced

 a tear

a tear from Sophia, it was a tear of pure benevolence, or meek unrepining grief. As for jealoufy, though I affirm that my heroine was as much in love as any heroine ought to be, fhe certainly never felt one uneafy moment on account of Lord Selborne's attentions to Lady Caroline. Even if Mr. Brudenell had not informed her of the motives of his vifits to Glanville-caftle, her lover's eyes were fuch terrible tell-tales, that, though fhe was lefs verfed in that fort of language than moft ladies of her age, fhe now and then hummed over this line of an old fong:

> "With pleafure I fee,
> Tho' his words are to *her*, yet his looks are to *me*."

Indeed fhe had a conftant motive for her own actions, which acquitted Selborne of all negligence and difaffection to his liege miftrefs: I mean a uniform wifh to alleviate the forrows of the un-

happy.

happy. So great are the variations of the human character, that what would have ruined this young nobleman in the esteem of *every* romantic damsel in the kingdom, confirmed his influence in Sophia's heart. Ladies of the above description are so fond of seeing their knights in the characters of lovers, that they are generally dissatisfied when they are engaged in any other service. My literary sisterhood, to do them justice, make a notable use of this propensity, by ekeing out their volumes with as many love-scenes in the space of two hours, as the most murderous beauty can reasonably expect to meet with in the course of her whole life. Determined not to encourage this passion for the extraordinary, and the sentimental, which has so often proved fatal to female repose, the little that I shall say of Lord Selborne shall be devoted to the delineation of his character as a human being.

being. And though falling upon his knees, kiſſing the lady's hand, wearing a lock of her hair, ſtealing her picture, with a proper quantity of "Oh's, angels, and divinities," would make him look very agreeable in *my* book, at leaſt in the judgment of eighteen, I ſhould myſelf feel ſo conſcious of being deſcribing a ſimpleton, that I never could deem him a fit companion for a woman of ſenſe. I ſhall, therefore, perſiſt in referring the growth of ſtrong affection between two very deſerving young people to the opportunities they mutually had of ſeeing each other in the moſt *eſtimable* point of view, I mean in the uniform practice of the ſocial and domeſtic virtues.

## CHAP. XIX.

### *The bitter Fruits of Jealousy, Romance, and Duplicity.*

THOUGH I hold it impossible for a well-principled, well-regulated mind, who chooses with prudence, and loves with delicacy, to give way to the extravagancies of *groundless* jealousy; yet I am ready to admit the tremendous effects that flow from that dreadful passion. It is, in my opinion, much more frequently the offspring of idleness, caprice, irritability, meanness, and conscious unworthiness, than of a sincere attachment seated in an *honest* heart. It has been said, that he "who does not

not doubt does not truly love." Unleſs this aphoriſm is ſolely confined to an humble ſenſe of our *demerits*, it is paying a compliment to the weakneſs of our nature, at the expence of the nobleſt of our paſſions.

Determined to uſe my utmoſt endeavours to prevent all froward coxcombs from believing themſelves to be lovers, becauſe they place no confidence in the ſmiling belle to whom they *laſt* ſwore invariable attachment, I will plainly tell them that jealouſy is a noxious creeper, which, whenever it is ſuffered to entwine around true affection, retards its growth, blaſts its bloſſoms, and corrodes its fruit. It may be tranſplanted into more generous ground, but it ſprouts *ſpontaneouſly* in a *barren* ſoil.

During the period of Lord Selborne's viſits at the caſtle, Mr. Raymond and this "green-eyed monſter" were inſeparable companions. Unable to diſ-

cover

cover the motive for this young nobleman's viſits, he adopted the prevalent opinion, that Lady Caroline had chained this ſon of Mars to her triumphal chariot. He in vain endeavoured, during the *ſtolen* interviews, with which the venality of Chenille and the weakneſs of her lady indulged him, to diſcover *which* of the Glanville divinities was the object of the viſcount's adoration; for he would hardly aſcribe ſuch a ſtrong intimacy to the hoſpitality which gentlemen generally ſhew to the military quartered near their country reſidences. He knew that Lady Caroline, ever "jealous of honour, ſudden and quick in quarrel," would violently reſent any direct interrogatories on this head, and not only queſtion his audacity in daring to ſuſpect her, but alſo the title by which he preſumed to claim a right of inquiring into her conduct. Not daring to

difclofe his own fears, he heard her commend the talents, perfon, manners, and conduct of Selborne, with fomewhat of that gnawing anguifh which Homer afcribes to Therfites, when the Grecian hoft founded the praifes of fome deferving hero; and he generally returned from thofe ftolen meetings, which he declared were the moft rapturous moments of his exiftence, in a humour

> "To drink hot blood, and do fuch deeds
> "As hell fhould blufh at."

With a hope of procuring fome information in the enemy's camp, he formed an intimacy with Selborne's brother officers; but here again all his plans were fruftrated. He found that his lordfhip was fcarcely ever at quarters, and his abfence was as conftantly afcribed to that little tyrant Lady Caroline, whofe health was every day drunk after dinner with three cheers, and a wifh that fhe

would ſoon beſtow herſelf and her ample fortune on the honeſt fellow whom ſhe compelled to ſuch cloſe attendance.

Raymond now endeavoured to glean ſome conſolation from a viſit to the FitzJohns; but, worſe and worſe, he there heard that the marriage was abſolutely determined upon. Meliſandriania could enumerate all the nuptial attire, and ſhe knew the exact price of the diamond hoop-ring. Lady FitzJohn was as methodical in her recapitulation of the articles of the ſettlement, as if ſhe had been the engroſſing clerk; and Artremidorus knew the names of the racers and hunters which Lord Selborne had purchaſed, in expectation of this large addition to his fortune. Sir Bronze, lolling back on the ſofa, and ſtaring Meliſandriania full in the face, proteſted it was his intention to form an acquaintance with a very ſtyliſh girl, whom Selborne had penſioned off, as an

an aukward incumbrance in his new character. I hope I need not add, that Miſs FitzJohn reproved this libertine ſpeech by a blow with her fan, and an exclamation of "ſhocking creature;" or that Lady FitzJohn, after an "Oh fye," and a ſmile at Sir Bronze's wit, harangued on the wickedneſs of the age, and pitied poor Lady Caroline. Such behaviour comes of courſe from ladies of high decorum; and the FitzJohns poſſeſſed that exact quantum which, though it impoſes no reſtraint on the converſation of gentlemen, is ſure to *notice* with *amazonian* intrepidity every attack on their own delicacy.

Raymond returned to his lodgings with a heavy heart, and a brain full of dark machinations; for, though Sir Bronze was too renowned for his ſkill at the long bow for any one to attach an idea of *probability* to his communications, he thought that by *altering* one part

part of the ſtory, *varniſhing* the other, and *ſuppreſſing* the name of his informant, he might contrive to ſhape it into a tolerable bugbear, ſufficient to terrify a nymph in love. He immediately created a Miſs Jenny; and, dreſſing her very prettily in youth, beauty, and innocence, fixed her in an eminent boarding ſchool. He then brought a handſome young officer under her window, who, after two tender love-letters, and ſix pathetic couplets, produced a rope-ladder, and perſuaded her to elope, and confide in his honour. The lady's family, of courſe, proved inexorable, and the lover faithleſs; and, after a variety of very pathetic ſcenes, Mr. Raymond at laſt fixed his imaginary frail one in elegant lodgings in Spring-Gardens, with two beautiful children, and at this time deſerted by her lover, and in a ſtate of frenzy and extreme diſtreſs. Lady Caroline, ſuppoſing that this ſtory was

told to excite her compaſſion, offered Mr. Raymond her purſe to relieve the woes of the ſufferer; but, after much circumlocution, that ſubtle defamer obſerved, that the deſcription of the ſeducer led him to conſider Lord Selborne as the author of this villainous deed, and that his ſuſpicions had received ſtrength from ſome dark hints thrown out by Miſs Randolph. Indignation and horror took full poſſeſſion of Lady Caroline's ſoul; and the terms in which ſhe expreſſed her abhorrence of ſuch nefarious guilt, hid under the maſk of open-hearted probity, confirmed Raymond in his jealouſy, and prompted him to exult in his own penetration. Miſinterpreting the emotion, which in reality only proceeded from her lively ſympathy in Sophia's wrongs, he formed a determination to have recourſe to ſome ſtratagem, which ſhould at once

fruſtrate

fruſtrate his ſuppoſed rival's hopes and confirm his own.

Raymond had but juſt left the temple which was the uſual ſcene of his interviews with Lady Caroline, and advanced to the corner of the park-wall that led towards the high road, when he unexpectedly encountered Sophia. That amiable girl, all frankneſs and delicacy herſelf, had long felt the moſt lively anxiety, from the apprehenſion that Lady Caroline's dejection and perturbation of mind proceeded from a clandeſtine and unworthy attachment. Fearful that her frequent ſolitary walks led to interviews with a man whom the earl never named without viſible though anxiouſly concealed marks of diſguſt and abhorrence, ſhe had followed her this morning, and with the keeneſt regret found her doubts verified.

The ſuperiority of ſound principles is never more apparent than when we are ſuddenly

ſuddenly involved in a perplexing ſituation. Sophia ſaw the line of duty clearly chalked out, and determined to ſeize the earlieſt opportunity to remonſtrate with Lady Caroline on the meanneſs and impropriety of clandeſtine aſſignations. She even reſolved to aſſume ſufficient courage to declare, that her ſenſe of duty to the earl of Glanville would compel her to diſcover that Raymond had the audacity to hover round his reſidence, unleſs Lady Caroline would plight her honour, that the engagement ſhould either be openly avowed, or immediately renounced. She roſe the next morning, determined to ſeize the firſt opportunity for a tête-à-tête with her friend, whom ſhe met upon the ſtairs equipped for a ride, and avowing her intention to breakfaſt with Miſs Randolph, with whom ſhe had ſome *particular* buſineſs. Sophia begged to accompany her; after ſome little heſitation,

tion, aſſent was given; and the ladies, mounting their horſes, proceeded on their expedition, followed by one attendant.

We may ſuppoſe that the converſation was peculiarly intereſting, ſince it conſiſted in a mutual attack and defence of each other's admirer. Sophia frankly confeſſed her eſteem for Lord Selborne, acknowledged that ſhe conſidered him in the light of a lover, and owned how far her preference was ſanctioned by Mr. Brudenell's approbation. She alſo proteſted, that if the narrative which Lady Caroline had juſt repeated proved to be true, her eſteem would diſappear with the imaginary excellence on which it was founded, and be ſucceeded by abhorrence. Lady Caroline's morning viſit to Miſs Randolph was intended to aſcertain the credibility of theſe ſuſpicions; and ſhe obſerved, that as Mr. Raymond adviſed her to go, the guilt of

of defamation could not reſt with *him.* Sophia was too much agitated with the fear that her emotions during this diſcuſſion would betray her ſecret preference to Miſs Randolph, to make her attack on Lady Caroline with the intended ſpirit and addreſs; and Lady Caroline, gathering more ſelf-command from the timidity of her aſſailant, coolly replied, that ſhe believed herſelf equal to the taſk of guarding her own fame, ſince her ſenſe of honour was as exalted, and her diſcrimination of right and wrong as *clear*, as if derived from Mr. Brudenell's ſyſtem of morals. At this inſtant two maſked ſoldiers darted from the wood by the ſide of which they were riding, and, ſeizing the bridle of Lady Caroline's horſe, deſired her to deliver her money. Sophia's horſe, taking fright at the confuſion this aſſault occaſioned, ran away with her; and the terrified rider, unable to check its impetuoſity,

petuofity, at length exhaufted by terror and fatigue, fell fenfelefs upon the ground. Some labourers who were at work in the adjoining field hurried to her affiftance; in a little time her recollection returned; and it was difcovered, that her arm was fractured by the fall; but, notwithftanding the torture arifing from the accident, her firft care was to difpatch immediate affiftance to refcue Lady Caroline from her perilous fituation. Neither her ladyfhip nor her horfe could be found; but the groom who attended them was difcovered about a hundred yards from the fpot where the ruffians attacked the ladies, bound hand and foot to a tree, and his horfe grazing at a little diftance. The honeft countrymen remarked on its being a little extraordinary that he did not cry out for help, efpecially when they came in fight; but John informed them, that he had been ftunned by the blows he had received,

received, and only recovered his ſenſes the moment they came to him. He could give very little account of the tranſaction; he ſaw his lady ſeized, and clapped ſpurs to his horſe to protect her; but in an inſtant he felt a violent blow acroſs his head from behind him, and, after an ineffectual ſtruggle with two more villains, was dragged from his horſe and beat in a moſt cruel manner, till he loſt all recollection. Never did any man by his own account fight ſo manfully, and yet he eſcaped unwounded. His clothes were, indeed, plentifully beſmeared with blood; but, as no one could diſcover whence it iſſued, he was forced to refer it to his opponents. The peaſants now urged him to riſe and join in the purſuit of his lady; but he was too ſtiff with bruiſes to be able to ſtir; and he alſo told them, that as the earl would certainly be diſpleaſed with any meaſures

that

that were taken without *his* permiſſion, the wiſeſt method would be to carry him to Glanville caſtle, inform his lordſhip of the alarming cataſtrophe, and ſolicit his inſtructions.

Though the firſt impulſes of plain ſimplicity are generally right, it is eaſily led by craft to adopt a ſcheme that appears to be the reſult of ſuperior ſagacity. They allowed that the earl of Glanville was a gentleman whom nobody knew how to deal with; that they might affront him by attempting to ſerve his daughter without leave; and that it was the wiſeſt way to leave her to depend on the mercy of her raviſhers, and conduct John home to bear witneſs that they had no hand in the plot. Notwithſtanding her fractured limb, Sophia reached the caſtle an hour before the groom; and though her account led the earl to conclude that they were common foot-pads who had aſſaulted his

his daughter, yet his anxiety and ſurpriſe at her abſence increaſed every moment. Deſtitute of that ſelf-command which reſults from a juſt eſtimate of human life, he paced his chamber in all the agony of terror and irreſolution, meditating on the inſult that had been offered to the blood of Glanville, till the groom arrived, whoſe account of this tranſaction aggravated his feelings to frenzy, and rendered him utterly incapable of iſſuing any orders.

Glanville-caſtle was now a ſcene of the utmoſt confuſion. A few of the ſervants were engaged in the neceſſary offices which Sophia's ſituation required; but, as ſhe made very little complaint, it was agreed that her hurt was of ſmall conſequence. Mrs. Chenille was in hyſterics at the loſs of her lady; and as poor John made the houſe re-echo with his groans, he of courſe greatly increaſed the general conſternation. The ſurgeon had

had indeed declared that he could not diſcover the ſmalleſt injury, and by a ſignificant ſhake of the head plainly indicated that he believed him to be a cheat; but as John affirmed that his were all inward bruiſes, the good-natured houſekeeper, who had a ſtrong faith in non-deſcript complaints, and a great contempt for the faculty, thought of nothing but proving the efficacy of a certain noſtrum, as famous in her own family as the celebrated medicine of cheeſe, wine, and flour, that Hecamede preſented to the wounded Machaon. "What's a broken bone or two?" ſaid good Mrs. Brown in the height of her philanthropy. "The doctors may ſee them, and put them together again; but when you come to inward ails, which are all *gueſs* work, old women are better than any doctors in the kingdom."

The remaining part of Lord Glanville's houſehold diſperſed various ways in

in ſearch of Lady Caroline; but the time and diſtance which the ruffians had gained excluded every reaſonable proſpect of ſucceſs. Evening came on, and neither the lady nor her purſuers returned. Sophia had ſome ſtrong ſymptoms of fever; and Lord Glanville, exhauſted by rage and grief, had ſunk into a gloomy torpor. At this inſtant the arrival of Lord Selborne diffuſed a momentary joy. On receiving the firſt intelligence of this dreadful event, he had diſpatched his company to join in the hue and cry, and haſtened himſelf to the caſtle, no leſs concerned for the ſituation of the ſufferers, than perplexed at ſuch an unuſual and myſterious occurrence. His firſt care was, to queſtion the ſervant, and try if his evidence could throw light upon the affair. By this time John was ſo amazingly recovered, as to bear almoſt miraculous atteſtation of Mrs. Brown's ſkill in the

healing

healing art, being not only in excellent ſpirits, but enabled to move with great alacrity; to which laſt event a bottle of Madeira, which is alſo a fine thing for inward bruiſes, probably contributed. His teſtimony, however, only ſerved to increaſe Lord Selborne's doubts; as it amounted to nothing more than that the ruffians were not only ſoldiers, but that they attacked him with fixed bayonets. On being interrogated more cloſely, John, who found his valour conſiderably increaſed by the warm potions that he had ſwallowed, told his lordſhip that he (Lord Selborne) moſt likely *knew* more of the buſineſs than he did. Selborne ſtarted at the impertinent remark, and perceived with aſtoniſhment that it was not only *underſtood* but *reliſhed* by the auditors.

Meditating how to act in ſuch extraordinary circumſtances, he requeſted permiſſion

permiſſion to ſpeak to Miſs Herbert. Sophia was ſeriouſly indiſpoſed: her apprehenſions for her friend increaſed her bodily ſufferings; and it was only by ſhort broken ſentences that ſhe could recapitulate what ſhe knew of the diſaſtrous event. Her account, however, confirmed his lordſhip's ſuſpicions that the whole affair was a conſpiracy, that the groom was an accomplice, and that there was a moſt nefarious deſign of involving him in the guilt of the attempt. Indignant at ſuch an abominable ſcheme, anxious for his own reputation, and full of tenderneſs and ſympathy for Sophia's undeſerved ſuffering; Selborne next requeſted to ſpeak to Lord Glanville, with an intention of declaring his reſolution of returning immediately to W——, and commencing the moſt minute ſcrutiny into the conduct of the military under his command. At this inſtant the noiſe of a carriage was heard,

 and

and a general burſt of joy announced that Lady Caroline was returned.

Impelled by a ſudden ſtart of natural affection, Lord Glanville ruſhed to the door to embrace his daughter; but his arms dropped from her neck when, with a look of triumph, ſhe bade him *alſo* welcome her deliverer. The earl at that inſtant ſaw Raymond, and all his raptures were ſuddenly chilled. A cold bow, and a ſtill colder acknowledgment of obligation, was all the return the knight-errant received. Raymond ſtarted, no leſs confuſed at this reception than at the unexpected appearance of Selborne, on whom he darted a glance full of deſperate malignity; while Selborne fixed his eyes on Raymond's countenance with a look of cool but ſtedfaſt diſpleaſure.

Lady Caroline was the firſt who broke ſilence. "If I am welcome home," ſaid ſhe to Raymond, "you,

ſir, are alſo welcome. It is to your courage, to your perſevering intrepidity that I owe my preſervation from the moſt unlicenſed outrage, the moſt unprincipled brutality. I leave you to narrate the particulars of my reſcue, though I am perſuaded that your modeſty will not do ſufficient juſtice to your merit. My agitated ſpirits will not permit me to ſay more at preſent, except that you have now an *eternal* claim upon my gratitude, and that I will reward you."

As Lady Caroline gave Raymond her hand at the concluſion of this ſpeech, of courſe he received it upon his knees, and, preſſing it to his lips, vowed eternal tranſport, obligation, reſpect, and love. Lord Glanville, during this ſcene, ſtood petrified with horror, ſometimes inclined to aſcribe his daughter's conduct to mental derangement, ſometimes wiſhing that ſhe had continued loſt ra-

ther than thus found, and fometimes debating whether he fhould order up his footmen, to pufh Orondates out of doors. His confternation increafed every moment, efpecially while Raymond gave an account of his own part in this adventure, which was unlike any thing that has happened fince Falftaff's achievements on Gad's hill. Like the fat knight, he had "men in Kendal green," and men in "Dowlas" to attack, nor could he, like his coadjutor the groom, boaft that he returned *unwounded* from the rencounter. He certainly appeared like one "efcaped from ruthlefs fight." One arm was in a fling; he had a black patch acrofs his forehead, and a lame leg; all indifputable figns of perfevering valour.

There were, however, fome particulars omitted in his account, that would have greatly impeached the probability

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of the narration; and thoſe which he did ſupply had much more of the *marvellous* than of the *ſatisfactory*. For he *happened* to be ſtanding at the door of a cottage, at the other ſide of the wood into which the ruffians dragged Lady Caroline; and, what was perhaps ſtill more ſurpriſing, after he had reſcued her, and ſhe had a little recovered from her alarm, an empty chaiſe and four drove by this *ſecluded* ſpot, moſt opportunely to convey her home. To be ſure, at firſt, owing to the ignorance of the driver, they took a wrong road, and were driving *from*, inſtead of *to* Glanville-caſtle; but a party of Lord Selborne's military put them right, and eſcorted her ladyſhip home in triumph. Lord Selborne's impertinent inquiries drew out ſome of theſe particulars; but Mr. Raymond ſoon grew ſullen, and complained that his ſervices demanded commendation rather than ſuſpicious

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altercation. Selborne then hinted that a refcue would not be difficult, if the refcuer had previoufly affifted in projecting the feizure; and Raymond replied that he would call on his lordfhip, and explain that point the next morning, and alfo fee whether the examination of his company of foldiers could any ways tend to explain the myftery. Selborne obferved, that he fhould rejoice in having the bufinefs clearly inveftigated. Raymond, with a fierce look, anfwered, that when a gentleman's honour was implicated, there was but one mode of decifion. Selborne added, "Confiftent with truth and juftice; I agree with you." He then bowed and withdrew.

No fituation can be more painful than that of a proud man who believes that he has been obliged by a perfon whom he both fears and hates. Lord

Glanville had now taken his resolution; and he therefore thought proper to make some precise formal acknowledgments to Raymond. He asked him if it were in his power to do him any service; he inquired what mode of life he would prefer, and without waiting for an answer, endeavoured to divert the conversation, by observing how aukwardly he now stood with administration. Raymond turned upon his heel, and declared his intention of calling upon Lady Caroline the next morning, after he should have paid his visit to Lord Selborne. The earl rang the bell, and very politely *bowed* his guest out of the room.

Full of indignation at the insult which had been offered to his family, and no less incensed at being reduced to hear a man like Raymond acknowledge his confidence in Lady Caroline's favour, the earl sent for his daughter, deter-

mined

mined to make her lofty ſpirit feel the power of paternal controul. She came at his ſummons, and readily acquainted him with every particular of her reſcue and eſcape; not one incident of which appeared extraordinary to her, for ſhe was familiarized to foreign manners, verſed in the narratives of German marauders and Italian banditti; and, of courſe, ſhe formed her idea of the behaviour of Engliſh footpads by thoſe models. She declared herſelf ignorant of the perſons by whom ſhe was ſeized, but that they wore maſks, were dreſſed in regimentals, and frequently repeated the name of Selborne. On being firſt attacked, ſhe delivered her purſe and watch; but on their ſeeming diſſatisfied, and dragging her into the wood, ſhe ſuppoſed that, diſpleaſed at the ſmallneſs of her treaſure, they intended to murder her; and, being perfectly careleſs about life, ſhe formed a reſolution to

to die with heroiſm. While they continued to drag her through the moſt unfrequented, intricate part of the foreſt, ſhe repeatedly conjured them to end her miſery, till at length they iſſued with her from the covert on the ſide next the moors; and her expectation of immediate death now yielded to more horrid apprehenſions. At this inſtant ſhe ſaw a ſhepherd's cottage, and Raymond walking before the door. She called him to aſſiſt her; he knew her voice, flew upon the villains, a dreadful conflict enſued, and ſhe was at liberty.

"I was too much exhauſted," continued ſhe, "to return home immediately; but, with a tenderneſs equal to his courage, Raymond conducted me to the cottage, where a little tranquillity, and ſome exquiſite refreſhments, reſtored my ſtrength; and, after ſome accidental delay, through miſtaking the right road, he conducted me home in ſafety. Too

noble

noble to impoſe any conditions, too generous to expreſs the ſentiments that he long has felt, while my agitated mind was incapable of clear judgment, it is *our* duty to give him an adequate and noble reward."

"Your notions, Caroline," returned his lordſhip, gradually relaxing his contracted brows into an *amiable* ſmile, "are frank and liberal. Gratitude is an hereditary virtue in the houſe of Glanville; and no one can accuſe me of degenerating from my anceſtors. However highly this young man rates his ſervices, he ſhall find my *bounty* exceed his expectations."

"Does your lordſhip mean," replied Lady Caroline in a high tone of voice, "to wound the feelings of a gentleman by the offer of your purſe? Such treatment might be proper to a mechanic, but not to a man of birth equal to your own, and only in fortune your inferior.

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We have long ſeemed to miſunderſtand each other; explicitneſs now becomes us both. Raymond has preſerved my life and honour, and *I* will reward him."

"Are you mad, Caroline?" interrupted the earl in a ſtill higher key than the lady had uſed. "Do you intend to beſtow yourſelf upon a beggar? a man deſtitute of character and fortune?"

"I can give him fortune," reſumed her ladyſhip, with a Sardonic ſmile; "and as to character, I have heard you obſerve, that nothing can be ſo indefinite as a perſon's reputation. People ſee the ſame object through different mediums. I have neither the means nor wiſh to correct the defects in your lordſhip's viſion; and you muſt pardon me, if, on this occaſion, I determine to act according to my own conviction. My ſoul is ſuperior to the prejudices of ſociety. My own heart is the moni-

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tor to which I liſten, and its fiat ſhall decide."

"Ungrateful girl!" the agitated father was inclined to exclaim, "is this my reward?" But the haughty indifference his daughter's countenance, who ſeemed prepared for the keeneſt retorts, induced him again to recollect himſelf, and change his ſtyle for one better adapted to her character. He acknowledged the obligations they owed to Raymond, but doubted of the propriety of her haſtily adopting ſuch a ſtrong reſolution in his favour. He ſpoke of the ridicule and mortifications that ſhe muſt encounter, if the romance terminated in a precipitate marriage. He ſpoke alſo of the *inconveniencies* of a narrow fortune, of the neglect of former acquaintance, and of the mean ſubterfuges to which titled poverty is compelled to have recourſe, in order to avoid open contempt. Theſe reflections ſtruck

Lady Caroline, especially as they were accompanied by an assurance that he had no personal objection to Raymond, and no latent views in opposing her wishes, but what proceeded from fond regard.

"Let me," said he, "guard your too susceptible and generous mind from the effects of a sudden impulse. Only reflect upon the step that you are going to take before you offer yourself a victim on the altar of gratitude. Above all do not, by an elopement from your father's house, give the world cause to arraign your discretion. If Mr. Raymond's merits can preponderate against the inconveniencies that must result from your union with him, remember your choice is free, and call upon me to confirm it."

While the earl uttered this speech, Lady Caroline looked up with astonishment.—"Surely," thought she, "a

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metamorphosis has taken place, and it is Brudenell who addresses me in this frank, benevolent, instructive language."

She caught her father's hand; he drew her to him; and, as he imprinted a kiss upon her cheek, he wetted it with a tear. Overcome by this unusual mark of *real* affection, a glow of filial duty warmed Lady Caroline's heart; she sunk involuntarily upon her knee, and promised to observe his counsels.

## CHAP. XX.

*Love in Heroics, and Virtue mounted on the high Stilts of Philoſophy, run away together.*

THE reader's ſurprize at the ſcene which concluded the laſt chapter will abate, when he conſiders that, as Lady Caroline's vehemence had thrown the earl too much off his guard, by making him avow his diſlike of Raymond, with very frank, unequivocal, and in his own opinion, dangerous ſincerity, a little deeper fineſſe became expedient; for, though the plain man, who treads ſurely in the ſtraight path of integrity, is only grieved by finding that he has committed an *intentional* fault, theſe perfect maſters of the

the ſcience of human nature, as profeſſed diſſemblers affect to ſtyle themſelves, are always willing to give up their *veracity*, to preſerve the reputation of their *judgment*.

The remarks of Lord Selborne upon Raymond's narrative had convinced Lord Glanville, that the pretended reſcue was only a ſcene in a deep laid plan, of moſt complicated treachery, which, though in ſome reſpects fruſtrated, might ſtill enſnare an unwary and romantic girl in the dangerous maze of obligation and gratitude. I truſt moſt fathers would have deemed it adviſeable to have communicated theſe ſuſpicions to their daughters, and would have pointed out the neceſſity of the moſt circumſpect conduct till every doubt was cleared. But, as this would have been abridging the liberty of a free independent being, and forcing his doubts upon an uncontaminated mind, the earl thought it

would

would better accord with his very enlightened character, to have recourse to a counter plot, to defeat the effect of those services which he appeared to admit in their fullest extent. As this project would be defeated by Lady Caroline's suspecting him to be capable of forming it, he was of course obliged to dress up his design in the neatest disguise of candour, liberality, and parental affection.

Lady Caroline found her father in a still more generous humour the next morning. He was impatient for Raymond's visit, hoping that he would behave with frankness, and desirous to have some plan pointed out by which he might serve him, and lay the foundation of a future friendship. He alluded to the high words that had passed between him and Lord Selborne, and expressed his hope that Caroline's extraordinary adventure might not involve her

her deliverer in any embarraſſing predicament. Lady Caroline doubted to what all this placidity would tend, and flew to Sophia to recount the amazing change which had taken place in her father's mind.—"If he really treats me," ſaid ſhe, "with the candour and ingenuouſneſs that he affects, even you Sophy ſhall not exceed me in the practice of filial affection; but if he deceives me——"

"Ah!" replied Sophia, in a tremulous voice, "if he does, would you then undo yourſelf, in order to be revenged? Deareſt Caroline, fix your virtues on a firmer baſis than the ſtability of a fellow-mortal. Act rightly yourſelf, and beware of meaſuring your own actions by the falſe ſtandard of another's faults."

Another day paſſed on, and Raymond and Selborne were alike ſtrangers at Glanville caſtle. Several meſſages, indeed, paſſed between the latter and the

the earl; but the ladies were informed that they were only civil inquiries after the health of the family. On the evening of the second day, Mrs. Chenille presented her lady with a letter from Mr. Raymond, which too well accounted for his absence. Not to dwell on minute particulars, the finances of that gentleman were in so deranged a state, that it became very easy for Lord Glanville to get him laid in durance; while, by one of those masterly turns on which his lordship particularly piqued himself, the disgrace of stimulating a resentful creditor to this action was heaped upon Lord Selborne, who was stated to have had recourse to this mean measure, in order to excuse himself from answering Raymond's allegation that he had been the contriver of the attack upon Lady Caroline, as well as to screen himself from the consequences of his resentment. The arrest took place the very

morning

morning after Raymond had sent Selborne a challenge; the young viscount was seen conversing with a sheriff's officer, and Raymond was inticed from his lodgings, and prevailed upon to walk in a field where the writ was served upon him, by a person in Selborne's confidence. Added to these circumstances, one of the bailiffs confessed that his client had been induced to execute the writ, by a neighbouring nobleman's having assured him that the debtor was able to discharge every demand. All this amounted to what Raymond, in his letter to Lady Caroline, pronounced the most positive proof of Selborne's baseness, cowardice, cruelty, and detestable treachery.

He also observed, that the time chosen to overwhelm him by this horrible conspiracy was the most unpropitious to himself that malice could have selected; for, by a strange combination of circum-

stances,

ſtances, Lord Phantome was gone upon a tour, and he knew not where he could be found. The marquis of Lethe found his recollection of Raymond's paſt ſervices overwhelmed by the innumerable applications of leſs worthy but more importunate petitioners. Sir Titup Cantwell had forfeited his word, and old Scapegrace, who had quarrelled with his houſekeeper, was but juſt making him diſtant overtures of reconciliation. Theſe he was conſcious would terminate in his being acknowledged the heir to all his fortunes; but prudence never would authorize him to appear before a miſer in the character of an inſolvent, to which parſimony always annexed the accuſation of thoughtleſs extravagance.

"I am utterly ruined," continued Raymond; "but I glory in the miſeries that proceed from the immutable conceptions I have formed of truth, juſtice, patriotiſm, and generous diſregard of all

intereſted

interefted views. Honour now bids me conceal thofe actions which are a fecret folace to my griefs, or I would tell Selborne what brought me to the cottage of virtuous poverty, and enabled me to refcue the moft exalted of women from his mercenary banditti. I could tell him, that the chaife, which ferved to affift that lovelieft paragon of excellence, whom his peftiferous breath was juft going to blaft, was returning from placing two children of affliction, whom it would better have became him to protect, in peace and in innocence. My improvident generofity tempted me to a premature expenditure of a younger brother's *fcanty* portion; but it is gone, fpent in deeds that cold-blooded villany knows not how to perform.

"O Lady Caroline! I fhall lay down my pen, and foon betake me to the wretch's laft hope.' Yet fuffer me to mufe one moment on the flattering vi-

fions

ſions that ſoothed my ſoul when I ſnatched you from the ruffians' graſp. Suffer me to recall your image, when, in the preſence of your imperious father, you gave me your hand, and with it an aſſurance that your heart ſhould do me juſtice. I here releaſe you from that promiſe. Your fortunes never muſt be blended with thoſe of the *diſhonoured* Raymond. By all my miſeries I ſwear, I would not draw the bright empreſs of my ſoul from the radiant ſphere which ſhe illumines, and extinguiſh her beams in the night of my calamity. Be you moſt bleſſed, moſt happy, rich in univerſal admiration, crowned with perpetual proſperity, the idol of exalted ſpirits, the delight of the whole world. I only urge two requeſts. Promiſe me never to plight your nuptial faith, to the execrable Selborne; and, when my woes and wrongs are depoſited in the *cold* grave, let your gentle boſom heave

heave *one* ſigh for him who adored you, as he would the viſible deity of beauty and truth."

There was a vaſt deal more in the ſame ſtyle; but, conceiving this ſpecimen ſufficient, I cloſe the quotation. The concluſion, however, was important. He ſtated, that he was now freed from the talons of thoſe harpies who call themſelves agents of the law; but that, as he felt himſelf indelibly *contaminated* by their touch, he was determined to apply to a ſovereign ſpecific for ſhame and ſorrow: this bloody-minded paragraph terminated with *three* dearеſts, and *five* farewells.

I requeſt every tender-hearted lady who honours theſe pages with a peruſal, and is a little gifted with the female grace of ſenſibility, to tell me how it was poſſible for Lady Caroline to reſiſt this letter. Being informed by Chenille that Raymond's ſervant, when he delivered

livered it, reluctantly owned that he had charged his maſter's piſtols before he left him, though he had afterward promiſed not to uſe them till his return from Glanville-caſtle, ſhe again looked over this tragic rant. The ſecret meſſages between Selborne and her father convinced her that the latter was at leaſt an active agent in the conſpiracy, and ſhe formed her reſolution the moment that ſuggeſtion flaſhed upon her mind. Her hand trembled too much to write a long anſwer; but her note, though laconic, was perfectly ſatisfactory; as it contained a requeſt that he would bring a chaiſe and four to the park gate at twelve that night, and, inſtead of dying, prepare to meet a faithful partner, who was reſolved to ſhow him that there was one exception to the general ingratitude, depravity, and treachery of the world.

Leaving Chenille to pack up her jewels and valuables, Lady Caroline now repaired to Sophia's apartment, who was still too much indisposed to leave her chamber. To her Lady Caroline confided Raymond's dolorous complaints; and, being exactly in the situation in which most people are when they ask advice, she requested Sophia to tell her what to do. Sophia was too much interested by the accusations urged against her own lover, to pay an immediate attention to her friend's request. Selborne a coward! a treacherous villain! the contriver of Raymond's arrest! the author of the assault on Lady Caroline! Impossible! What could his views be? Is it consistent with human nature, for a man who has always acted with most amiable uprightness, *suddenly* to become a dark and hardened conspirator? 'Tis true, they who talk much of virtue sometimes fail in the practice; but

but Selborne, far from running into the ſentimental cant, ſeemed too careleſs to attempt to bring his virtues into obſervation. You heard of his good deeds from others; you always met him in the path of unaſſuming duty; you conſtantly ſaw him acting and ſpeaking as he ought; and yet he ſeemed to conſider this undeviating propriety too much a thing of courſe to be worth talking about. Every rule that Mr. Brudenell had laid down to aſſiſt her in eſtimating the moral qualities of others, induced her to give the amiable Selborne the noble commendation of meaning right and acting well; and the unſupported accuſations of *a Raymond* ought not to induce her to change her opinion.

After vindicating Lord Selborne with a warmth that made Lady Caroline pity the blind credulity of love, Sophia recollected that ſhe was called upon to act

as

as a counſellor upon this momentous occaſion, and ſhe adviſed her friend to ſhew this letter to her father. "No," ſaid Lady Caroline, delivering her the paper with a very heroic air, "be yours that office. To you I depute the taſk of vindicating my conduct, and defending my fame. Tell Lord Glanville, that his daughter has been juſt, *ſincere*, generous, and add, if you dare, that ſhe adviſes him to imitate thoſe virtues."

"What do you mean?" cried the terrified Sophia, feebly attempting to detain Lady Caroline. "What is it you propoſe?"

"To quit for ever," returned the other, "this den of tyranny, this labyrinth of guile. O Sophy, I have this inſtant had all my ſuſpicions of Lord Glanville's treachery *cruelly* confirmed. Your generous noble heart will revolt at the recital. Selborne is not the *only* nobleman who conſpired againſt Ray-

mond's freedom. I have made old Jervais own, that his maſter knew of the arreſt, nay that a meſſenger was privately diſpatched to the creditor who had taken out a writ againſt him the very evening my brave deliverer reſcued me from diſhonour and death; the evening too on which all my ſuſpicions were lulled aſleep by the deſigning careſſes of a father ſhall I ſay, or of a deſigning ſycophant? If you doubt my aſſertions, I will name to you the perſon who travelled all night upon this buſineſs. Now, Sophy, will you ſtill talk to me of duty to ſuch a father?"

"If his lordſhip acted thus," returned Sophia, "he is certainly highly culpable. But as his plan is defeated, as Mr. Raymond is again at liberty, ſurely his mortification at an unavailing piece of treachery will be its own puniſhment. But do explain what you mean to do?"

"*I* do *not* mean to ſhew the earl this letter," ſaid Caroline ſignificantly.

"On cooler reflection," returned Sophia, "I think it would be wrong to put Mr. Raymond into the power of his perſecutors; for his behaviour to you unqueſtionably deſerves a grateful acknowledgment. My purſe is not very weighty, but perhaps, Caroline, it may add a little to the contents of yours; and a gentleman in his predicament may require—I mean might not be violently hurt, if you were to preface your preſent with ſome handſome compliment."

"No," ſaid Lady Caroline with great compoſure, "I need not tax your friendſhip, Sophy. I have enough to carry us to London; and, as ſoon as I am married, I know my guardians will reſign their truſt of my grandfather's fortune."

 "To

"To London!" exclaimed Sophia with painful eagerneſs. "O Caroline! are you going to put yourſelf wholly in the power of a man of whom you know ſo little, and that little not *quite* to his advantage?"

"I know," reſumed the fair enthuſiaſt, "that I owe him an obligation, that he has ſuffered upon my account, and that my friends have treated him with cruelty. Do you draw the concluſion, and tell me what I ought to do."

"I will," ſaid Sophia; "and may your better judgment correct the error of your firſt reſolve. May not an obligation, ſuch as we all owe to a fellow-creature in diſtreſs, be repaid by ſomething ſhort of the ſacrifice of all your future proſpects? Have you not ample power to remunerate Mr. Raymond, for the tranſient trouble and diſgrace that he has incurred, not *wholly* upon your

your account, but certainly in part by his own want of prudence and œcono-my? And can you in no other way convince him that you do not approve of Lord Glanville's certainly ungrateful conduct, but by ſhewing him that you will for his ſake renounce every conſide-ration that you owe to filial duty, to your own welfare, and to the opinion of the world?"

"You muſt not talk of filial duty," ſaid Lady Caroline, interrupting her friend with a diſdainful ſmile, "ſince I never acknowledge that the *accidental* circum-ſtance of primogeniture confers an *ar-bitrary* neceſſity of obedience. I have heard your arguments; now liſten to my reſolves. I mean to beſtow myſelf and my fortune on Mr. Raymond. By the liberality of this action I ſhall bind his generous mind to eternal gratitude; and I ſhall ſhew the man whom I deſpiſe, how weak and futile are all his ſchemes.

 Lord

Lord Lewfon's bequeft is adequate to all my wants. The fcenes that I witneffed abroad have taught me to fpurn the adventitious importance that is derived from wealth and rank, and to fix real greatnefs in the inherent qualities of the foul. True to my own rules of conduct, I yield you, Sophia, the full poffeffion of the Glanville eftate. The law recognizes your juft title to it; but I, who judge from fomething beyond the legal letter, acknowledge your claims of right, as originating from deeds that I deem of higher validity than the quaint terms of conveyances and records. Had you been lefs worthy I might have been tortured by mean regret; but I know that the inheritance which I confidered as my birth-right will devolve on one who *deferves* it; and I refign it without a figh."

"Generous woman!" replied Sophia, burfting into tears; "let me intreat you

for

for your own ſake—conſider to what your raſh preference of Raymond expoſes you."

"The die is caſt," returned Lady Caroline; "the time is fixed for my departure; and if your intreaties cannot detain me, be aſſured force will be of no avail. If Lord Glanville purſues me, I will either aſſert my natural rights or periſh in the attempt. But mark, Sophia, I am not the mere dupe of love, a drivelling girl who flies off with an adventurer. No, I am guided by ſuperior motives. I prove my enlarged conception of moral fitneſs; I expoſe duplicity, I humble tyranny, I obey the call of honour. I muſt, I ſhall be happy; for happineſs is ſeated in the ſoul, and the ſoul exults when we perform high deeds of heroic worth. Juſtice, the cardinal virtue of our unſophiſticated nature, bids me torture the proud mean earl of Glanville; it prompts me to detect

detect his craft, to triumph in his defeat——"

"Oh!" ſaid Sophia, "for heaven's ſake! think more of your own proſpects than of revenge againſt your father. Is not Mr. Raymond a ſpendthrift and an unſettled character? I would not offend you, dear Lady Caroline; but do conſider, are his principles well ſpoken of?"

"Not by thoſe who hate and perſecute him, I grant; but, even ſuppoſing him to be what you have heard him deſcribed, the noble liberality of my behaviour muſt ſecure his eternal gratitude; and I ſhall at leaſt have the ſatiſfaction of living with a man who owes to me both his life and fortune."

"If he has a bad heart," anſwered Sophia, "that recollection will only prompt him to treat you with unkindneſs; nay, perhaps to reproach you with that preference which he may be baſe enough to call indiſcretion."

"You

"You had better direct these scrupulous observations to Selborne's character," returned Lady Caroline. "Remember, if I suffer for my folly, the misery will be all my own."

"*No*," said Sophia with a look of affecting tenderness; "I would dissuade, but I perceive I only incense you. Go then, dearest Caroline; and, if my warm wishes can prevail, you will always think me uncandid and illiberal in these my premonitory warnings. But if, which heaven forbid! you should ever want a friend; if, injured where you have placed implicit trust, the anguish of your heart should remind you of this conversation, remember these arms that would have held you back, will always be ready to embrace you, and to give you a *sister's* share of all that I possess."

"I thank you," returned Lady Caroline; "and in return hear my parting adjuration. Never put any confidence in

in Lord Glanville, and do not marry Selborne till he is cleared from theſe diſhonourable imputations. Your hand, Sophia; I now put your friendſhip to the proof. If your high notions of duty ſhould induce you to appriſe the family of my flight, my adventures will have a tragical termination. To-morrow morning you are at liberty to act as you pleaſe."

"Will you not be prevailed upon?" ſaid Sophia all bathed in tears. "O undone Caroline! O generous, but greatly erring friend!" The amiable girl continued to give way to the impulſe of unavailing grief, while Lady Caroline, glorying in her ſublime energies, and attended by Chenille, gained the park-gate unperceived by any of the family.

I am not ſure whether I ſhould not here introduce a few popular embelliſhments. Suppoſe the lady, on ſtepping into the high road, were to meet a tall,

a tall, flitting, loose-robed spectre, whose pallid features, indistinct groans, and blood-stained vesture should convince her that Raymond had done "the bloody deed." Or suppose that at the moment when the wretched lover was priming his pistols, Lady Caroline was to pop upon him with a "Stop! I am come." Or suppose, like Romeo, forgetting that he had killed himself, he should get into the post-chaise as if nothing had happened.—Instead of hobgoblins or wonders, Mr. Raymond stood at the parkgate, waiting for the fair one's arrival, and not much afraid of being obliged to have recourse to "lovely amiable death." The lady met him without saying that she was astonished to find him alive; and he so far forgot the *contamination* he had suffered from the vile bailiffs, that he not only handed her into the chaise, but seated himself by her side.

fide. "The barbs" flew apparently as faft as Leonora's; and for the firft twenty miles the gentleman was all gratitude and rapture. But rapture cannot laft for ever, and gratitude is apt to cool. I have heard that from the fatigue of a rapid journey, the apprehenfions of purfuit, and the crofs incidents that happen upon the road, the Hymeneal Vulcan fometimes fees as fombrous looking fuppliants approach his altar, as thofe pitiable victims of prejudice, and flaves to routine, who walk hand in hand to the village church, at the head of a dull proceffion of parents and kindred, and return home, amidft the clamour of bells, to eat bride cake, and be comfortable.

Since the dear love of adventure feduces many a "Lydia Languifh," to meet poor "frozen Beverley" in the garden, who might as well have been

fitting

ſitting at the parlour fire; and to ſteal down a ladder of ropes, when the ſtreet-door would have ſtood wide open; I wiſh to perſuade all boarding-ſchool miſſes, that the pleaſure of adventure, like moſt other pleaſures, ceaſes the very moment it is enjoyed. When all the perils of purſuits and "hair-breadth eſcapes" are over; when, after a rapid race to Gretna-green, Strephon with Delia at his ſide returns leiſurely home again; at leaſt when the newſpapers have done announcing that "the beautiful daughter of a gentleman of great reſpectability lately *jumped* from a one pair of ſtairs window, *ſcaled* the parapet wall of her father's laundry, ſcrambled over the ha-ha, *waded* through the canal, and after a thouſand dangers from highwaymen, footpads, gypſies, conſtables, and juſtices of the peace, happily joined the gallant and accompliſhed enſign Bluſter, with whom ſhe immediately ſet out on a con-

a connubial expedition to "that happy land where *marriage ſtill is free*:"—I ſay when all this is over, love drops his brocaded ſuit of romance, and buckles on the plain camblet of common life. Woe be to the wedded pair ſhould they then perceive that the deſire for the undertaking aroſe from the difficulty of its being accompliſhed! No brave contempt of parental ſanctions, no generous defiance of maiden delicacy, no patient endurance of ſupererogatory dangers, will ſnap thoſe *galling fetters*, which their bewildered fancies miſtook for the *ſilken cords of love*.—I was proceeding in this ſtrain of advice to the miſſes of the preſent day, till, recollecting that the increaſed depravity of morals has ſanctioned ſuch frequent breaches of the marriage vow as to make it conſidered rather as the looſe cincture of accommodation and convenience, than

as

as a holy indiſſoluble obligation, I bluſh for the licentious degradation of the *matronly* character, and refrain from ſatirizing the levities of youthful temerity.

## CHAP. XXI.

*Love in common Life, and Virtue in an old-fashioned Attire, agree that it is best to try to be contented.*

WE left Lady Caroline, in the last Chapter, performing, according to her own opinion, the most exalted act of which a human being is capable; namely, avowing her contempt of opinions, prejudices, customs, and laws; of course, as success crowned her efforts, she *inevitably* became very happy.

Poor Sophia meantime remained as wretched as a mean timid slave of duty and prescription can possibly be; for she certainly felt as uncomfortable as a person ever is, who continues conscious that

that they have faithfully endeavoured to act as they ought. Lady Caroline's threats had intimidated her from alarming the family; but the fearful apprehensions of the dreadful scenes that would follow the elopement racked her bosom with doubt and terror. I do not mean doubt how she herself was to act; for, being free from that species of moral chemistry which rarefies, distills, evaporates, and compounds virtues, till they change their natures and become vices; she *clearly* discerned the line of her *own* duty, and fancied that it consisted in an endeavour to mitigate Lord Glanville's distress, and to reconcile him to his daughter.

Full of this idea, she determined to exert her strength to the utmost, and, in spite of pain and languor, to visit him in his chamber, and break the sad tidings with the utmost caution and gentleness. She had naturally wished for

Mr.

Mr. Brudenell's counſel and ſupport, and ſhe regretted that the effects of her accident prevented her from writing to him for his direction at this awful emergency. A mind properly diſpoſed as to the events of this life is never guilty of diſcontent: mild regrets and humble wiſhes are all that it preſumes to oppoſe to thoſe unfavourable events which Divine Providence often brings to paſs, as well to accompliſh its immenſe plan of univerſal ſuperintendence, as to try and prove the defective virtue of finite man. Sophia recollected that it was not her own fault that ſhe was now deprived of the aſſiſtance of her deareſt and beſt friend; "He," ſaid ſhe, "is faithfully diſcharging the ſacred duties of his function; I will hope that I ſhall be ſupported in this hour of trial, as I do not rely on my own ſtrength, but with ſincerity of intention, and humility of judgment, reſolve to do the beſt I can."

Iſſuing

Iſſuing from her chamber in this pious frame of mind, ſhe beheld with rapture the venerable man advancing towards her, and in a moment found herſelf locked in his embraces. Mr. Brudenell had been informed by Lord Selborne of the circumſtances attending Sophia's accident, and he travelled all night, no leſs from the hope that he might render ſome eſſential ſervices to Lord Glanville and his daughter, than through anxiety for the ſafety of his beloved Sophy.

Mr. Brudenell liſtened to Sophia's account of Lady Caroline's raſh conduct. That turn of mind which ſo admirably correſponded with his ſacred profeſſion, led him to point out to his attentive grand-daughter the juſt dealings of the Divine Ruler of the univerſe. "In vain," ſaid he, "do infidels deny his exiſtence; he compels them to *feel* his power. They go on triumphantly in their ſinful courſe, ignorant that they are

are only accomplishing the views of Him, who causes the wicked to fall into the snare which their own hands have prepared. By subtlety, deceit, and dishonest plans, Lord Glanville has lost his daughter, and most keenly wounded his own pride; while she, indulging her humour of blind obstinacy and mad revenge, has blasted the blossoms of her youthful hope, and condemned her future life to disappointment, chagrin, and vain remorse. These will probably be her companions for many years after her hated father, whom she wished to mortify and perplex, has escaped from the wrath of man, to witness the righteousness of God."

They now began to talk of the part that Lord Selborne had acted in this business; and Mr. Brudenell observed, that the accusations which Raymond had brought against him had scarcely face enough to merit inquiry. Yet, as

as precipitate judgment is wrong, even in its hasty efforts to vindicate a virtuous character from opprobrium, he thought it would be adviseable to wait the effect of time; especially as Selborne's absenting himself from the castle, when his presence and services might be of use to the family, had a singular aspect.

The intelligence of Lady Caroline's elopement threw Lord Glanville into a paroxysm of rage, that mocked every attempt at consolation. He execrated her ingratitude, in terms very inapplicable to an enlightened philosopher; and when he wished her poverty, infamy, and remorse, he tacitly admitted the force of principles that he had during his whole life denied. So powerfully did his mental anguish agitate his weak frame, that it was at first thought his life would fall a sacrifice to the keen emotions of wounded pride, and the "compunctive visitings" of remorse.

In

In one of thoſe moments when the mind, by intenſely muſing on its preſent regrets, renounces the force of former habits, Lord Glanville formed the reſo-ſolution of puniſhing his unworthy daughter, by publiſhing his own infamy, acknowledging Sophia for his heireſs, and uniting her to the nobleman whom he once deſtined for his ſon-in-law. The behaviour of Selborne during the late ſtrange occurrences had convinced the earl that he was miſtaken in the object of the young viſcount's wiſhes; and various incidents made him ſuſpect that a reciprocal attachment ſubſiſted in Sophia's gentle boſom. Many years had paſſed ſince Lord Glanville felt the power of love; and we have already ſeen that he was but a refractory ſubject to that generally abſolute ſovereign. He depended upon the gentleneſs of Sophia's temper, and the ſtrength of her principles; and imagined that if he could

but

but once extort a promiſe of obedience to his wiſhes, compliance in all points would neceſſarily follow. As to any regret for uſing Lord Selborne ill, the earl was not of a nature to feel the nice compunctions of honour, when ſelf ſtood in his way. He welcomed him to Glanville-caſtle, while he fancied his viſits promoted his ſchemes; that hope being fruſtrated by his daughter's imprudent marriage, he reſolved to break off a connexion that would only counteract the extenſive deſigns of aſpiring craft, or, if you pleaſe, *conſummate wiſdom.*

Some people may ſuppoſe that Lord Glanville had too recently experienced the ill effects of plot and deſign, to purſue that method of acting; but he held plain dealing in ſuch contempt, that he never choſe the ready road even in wickedneſs. He, therefore reſolved to *compel* an amiable mind to obedience, by ſtratagem;

ſtratagem; and to *cheat* an affectionate heart into a renunciation of a preferred lover, by the very action that ſeemed to bind itſelf to him for ever.

His languid frame appeared reanimated by this device. He ſent for Sophia into his apartment, made many inquiries after Lord Selborne, praiſed his character, and lamented that he was now wholly engroſſed by military affairs. The poet has remarked, that, to an enamoured mind, no muſic is ſo ſweet as "the praiſes of the man ſhe loves." But while Sophia's cheek fluſhed with modeſt joy, the earl ſuddenly inveighed againſt Lady Caroline, and called on his grand-daughter to reprobate her conduct. Sophia confeſſed it to be very wrong; but hoped that if Lady Caroline ſeemed happy in her choice, and requeſted pardon, he would be induced to forgive her. "Never," was the earl's ſtern anſwer. "And now, Sophia, may I not expect that

that what you condemn in another you will yourſelf avoid? Do you acknowledge that *you* owe me duty, gratitude, affection, and obedience?"

"O, moſt aſſuredly," replied Sophia. "I will endeavour to promote your happineſs, and to ſooth your ſorrows!"

"'Tis well," returned his lordſhip. "Am I to underſtand this promiſe as including *obedience* to my will in a matrimonial engagement?"

Sophia pauſed a moment. She was perſuaded that her grandfather was going to propoſe Lord Selborne for her huſband; and, as ſhe felt angry at his not having been to inquire after her ſince her late dreadful accident, ſhe thought it right to conſider whether ſhe could forgive him, before ſhe promiſed implicit obedience to this demand.

"You heſitate," reſumed his lordſhip; "I thought that with *you* words and

and deeds were ſynonymous." As the ſtorm of anger blackened in his countenance every moment, Sophia did not feel ſufficiently courageous to *withſtand* his diſpleaſure; but, ſecretly reſolving to ſhew the young viſcount that ſhe could reſent negligence, ſhe aſſured Lord Glanville, that, though ſhe was very happy in her preſent ſtate, ſhe was ready to obey his wiſhes.

"You ſhall find your account in ſo doing," replied the earl, ringing his bell.

Mr. Brudenell was requeſted to attend, and the heads of the houſehold were ſummoned.—"You will take notice," ſaid Lord Glanville, addreſſing himſelf chiefly to the ſteward, "that *this* young lady, whom I intruſted from ſome private reaſons to that gentleman's care, is my grand-daughter, my ſon's only child, and the lineal iſſue of my firſt

and

and lawful marriage. Raymond's wife, whom I called my daughter, is merely the illegitimate offspring of an illegal connexion: I educated and cheriſhed her; and, from deſpair of recovering my heir, I gave her reaſon to hope for part of my fortunes. The ingratitude of this woman correſponds with the ſtigma of her birth, and ſhe deſerves the infamy to which I abandon her. You are all witneſſes to this my declaration. It is my pleaſure, that Miſs Glanville's birth ſhould be publicly explained, and that ſhe ſhould be acknowledged as heireſs to my fortunes, and miſtreſs of my family."

During this ſpeech, a contrariety of paſſions agitated Sophia's mind. The ſatisfaction which muſt neceſſarily reſult from this public reſtitution of her natural rights, was blended with pity for the repudiated daughter, and horror that the unrepenting ſinner thus not only

only avowed his crimes, but gloſſed them over with an air of merit. The flattering commendations that were poured upon herſelf, and the cenſures that were laviſhed upon the fallen Caroline, reminded her of the different aſpect which the common herd of characters always preſent to proſperity and adverſity. Ungratified by the hollow praiſe of venal expectation, ſhe begged Mr. Brudenell to lead her from the painful ſcene. As ſhe paſſed by Jervais ſhe perceived that his cheeks were wet with tears. "Good old man," ſaid ſhe, preſſing his hand as he opened the door, "you feel that you have loſt a friend." Jervais only replied by a low bow, and a ſigh for his former lady.

"Am I wrong?" ſaid ſhe to Mr. Brudenell, as ſoon as they were alone. "Greatly as Lord Glanville has laboured to oblige me, I do not feel obliged. I will certainly faithfully perform all my

premiſes,

promiſes, I will endeavour to divert his afflictions, I will ſteadily obey his commands; but indeed this will not be a labour of love. I ſhall rejoice when I am liberated from this taſk. Yes, dear grandpapa," continued ſhe, throwing her arms round Mr. Brudenell's neck, "I ſhould rejoice, even if Selborne appeared leſs amiable to me, than, if you will not rally me, I confeſs he does."

"Dear ingenuous girl," replied Mr. Brudenell, "may you have no worſe enemy to encounter than my raillery! But tell me, what have you promiſed? and why do you ſuppoſe Lord Glanville means to beſtow you on Selborne?"

Sophia then repeated all that had paſſed between her and the earl, and aſked if it was not a fair, nay a neceſſary inference.

"It appears to be ſo," ſaid Mr. Brudenell; "and there is only one objection to

to this interpretation. Such conduct is too frank and noble for Lord Glanville."

"Ah!" cried Sophia, "that ever I should call you uncandid. But you do not know the high estimation in which the earl holds Lord Selborne."

"It is not a want of candour," replied Mr. Brudenell, "to draw those inferences which are most natural. If Lord Glanville seemed sensible of his former faults, I should believe he would adopt the plan most likely to give repose to his old age, by endeavouring to render you happy. But while he can at once recollect the enormous offences of his youth; and yet not only resolve on a total renunciation of his daughter for a less fault, but even gild and polish his own crimes, nay convert them into wise and noble actions:—O Sophy! is it uncharitable to doubt such a man? But we will endeavour to hope the best, and

intreat heaven to open his eyes that he may ſee the error of his ways."

Miſs Glanville was going to reply, when ſhe ſaw Lord Selborne approaching. "Had I not better avoid him?" inquired ſhe in an irreſolute tone. Mr. Brudenell bade her only ſtay till the firſt civilities were paſſed, and added that he would endeavour to bring on an eclairciſſement.

Selborne joined the party in evident confuſion. He expreſſed his regret at not having been able to make perſonal inquiries after Miſs Herbert's health; and added, that they had both been engaged in many unpleaſant ſcenes ſince they laſt met. Mr. Brudenell undertook to anſwer for his grand-daughter; obſerved, that Lord Selborne's time was always uſefully and properly employed; and added, that, as ſhe was ſtill too unwell to bear exertion, ſhe had better return to the houſe. "Your lordſhip," ſaid he,

he, " will perhaps favour me with your company, while I examine the progress of some new improvement which Lord Glanville is making at the bottom of the park." Selborne assented. Sophia withdrew. A degree of mutual trepidation kept the gentlemen silent for a few moments. Mr. Brudenell at last began the conversation with thanking his young friend for sending him such speedy intelligence of Sophia's misfortune.

" I have often," said Selborne, " availed myself of your permission to visit your lovely grand-daughter. In mind and in person, she is to me the most amaible of her sex; nor can I have one idea of future happiness, in which she is not included. I have even hoped that I had made some progress in her good opinion; and I should ere now have ventured on a declaration, had not the artifices of Raymond, and the impru-

imprudence of Lady Caroline, thrown various obſtacles in my courſe. Perhaps, ſir, you have heard that my endeavours to withdraw that unfortunate woman from a very imprudent connexion have been ſo far miſconſtrued, as to be brought forward in proof of my having had a deſign upon her perſon. But my beloved Sophia ſhall be my juſtification: I had no reaſon for diſguiſe. She ſaw my attentions to her unhappy friend; and I perceived with rapture, that her true greatneſs of ſoul led her not only to diſcern, but to approve the motive of them."

"Certainly," ſaid Mr. Brudenell, caſting his eyes upon the ground, with a ſomewhat myſterious air, "there was ſome probability that a woman of Lady Caroline's high expectations and perſonal advantages, might attract a man of your lordſhip's diſcernment; and though I am willing to believe that Sophia was

*really* your choice, yet thoſe who were ſtrangers to your ſentiments might think it poſſible that——"

"How falſely muſt they judge," ſaid Selborne impatiently, "who could indeed prefer a vain violent woman to *your* Sophia's modeſt graces! Can you imagine that I could have been mean enough, even if I had been ignorant of the ſtate of Lady Caroline's heart, to heſitate for an inſtant between immenſe wealth and certain happineſs?"

"I believe," obſerved Mr. Brudenell dryly, "that your lordſhip will have no cauſe to complain even of pecuniary loſs, by your not having run away with Lady Caroline."

"I have minutely inveſtigated that atrocious calumny," replied Selborne. "Two of the four villains who were engaged in the buſineſs are diſcovered, and have confeſſed, not only that Raymond was their employer, but that he

never

never meant to have brought the lady back to Glanville-caſtle, had not his full intentions been fruſtrated by meeting ſome of my company whom I had diſpatched in ſearch of her; though he had, at the ſame time, ſo concerted the enterpriſe as to implicate me in the diſgrace, in caſe it ſhould fail. I had purpoſed to have proſecuted theſe villains for a conſpiracy; but as Lady Caroline has now entirely thrown herſelf into Raymond's power, farther inveſtigation would not only be uſeleſs but imprudent. For her ſake, therefore, I purpoſe to huſh up the inquiry."

Mr. Brudenell now adverted to the ſtory of Raymond's arreſt, and found, as he ſuſpected, that Lord Glanville was the *ſole* contriver of that artifice. Selborne owned that he had received a challenge; but he alſo added with that tempered courage which ſhould ever diſtinguiſh a Chriſtian ſoldier, that he had

refuſed

refused to accept it. "I wrote him word," said he, "that my military reputation was established; that my King and my country had a right to my life; and that I would not risk it in a private quarrel, with a man whom I knew to be a slanderer; but whom, nevertheless, I had never injured. I added, that if he chose to assault me, I wore a sword, and was not destitute of skill to defend my life from open attacks. As for secret machinations, I trusted in Providence to preserve me from them.

"You must hear me a little farther," continued Lord Selborne, snatching Mr. Brudenell's hand, while a tear of manly feeling trembled in his eye. "I see that you approve of my conduct hitherto in this affair; but spare your commendations, and tell me how I should now act. A few days ago I received notice from the War-office to hold myself in immediate readiness, as the detachment

to which I belong was ordered on foreign ſervice. I have ſince learned, that it is going on an expedition eſteemed neceſſary to the ſafety and glory of this empire; but likely to be dangerous and bloody. I muſt obey the call of my country, Mr. Brudenell; all earthly conſiderations yield to that obligation; and, as far as relates to myſelf, I feel that I could willingly reſign my life to purchaſe her ſecurity and repoſe. But tell me, circumſtanced as I am, ought I to wiſh to bind your Sophia in ties which ſhe may afterwards repent? I conſider myſelf as only in poſſeſſion of a moiety of life; and, if I eſcape falling in the field of battle, may not I return home maimed and infirm, my health ſacrificed to a peſtilential climate or extreme fatigue, and my mind cruſhed by bodily calamities? Ought I to expoſe your Sophia to the chance of being contracted to diſeaſe, miſery, or inſanity? Should what

may prove the laſt important act of my life, be a deed of ſelfiſh cruelty to the woman whom I beſt love? Tell me how I ought to act; I would be diſintereſted, but not affectedly romantic. I would be juſt to Sophia, and yet not treacherous to myſelf."

"The ſcenes of my early life," ſaid Mr. Brudenell, "have too long paſſed by to allow me to be a good love caſuiſt; but I will give you the plain ſentiments of an old man. There is a delicacy in your ſuggeſtions: if they proceed from a ſuppoſition that your own choice is not ſo fully determined but that future circumſtances may change your preſent ſentiments, perſevere in your ſilence to my child; for ſuch heſitation is prudent to yourſelf, and honourable to her."

"I have told you," replied Selborne impatiently, "that my affections are *invariably* fixed. I will not ſuppoſe, ſir, if

if you doubt my word, that you would place confidence in my *protestations*."

"Then," returned Mr. Brudenell, "put at least a possible case, and let that decide your conduct. Suppose you should return in peace, safety, and glory, to your native country, and then find 'your happiest choice already linked and wedlock-bound to a far worse;' would you not condemn that over-refining generosity, which, distrustful of the kind protection of Providence, neglected to inform your mistress of your sentiments, leaving her persuaded that you were indifferent, to unite herself with a man whom, if you had been ingenuous, she would have refused? I leave you to reflect on this circumstance; and remember, that you may be explicit without forming a positive *contract*."

Selborne perceived in an instant, that what he had supposed to be a most exalted proof of heroism, belonged in reality to

that ſpecies of fictitious ſentimental refinement which ſports with genuine tenderneſs, under the diſguiſe of more elevated ideas and more exalted virtue!

"Sophia," thought he, "muſt have interpreted my aſſiduous attentions, and I will not permit her to think me a coxcomb, who can meanly trifle with her ſenſibility. I will diſcloſe to her my whole heart; and, ſhould heaven reſtore me in ſafety to my native country, I will not ſubject myſelf to the reproachful reflection, that I have loſt to me the deareſt object it contains through faſtidious delicacy."

Lord Selborne's route being fixed to commence next morning, a prompt declaration became neceſſary. Owing, I ſuppoſe, to exceſſive ſurpriſe, Sophia quite forgot to aſſume that air of reſentment which ſhe had determined to put on, as a puniſhment for former negligence. Perſuaded that her lover's ad-

dreſſes

dreſſes were ſanctioned by the approbation of both her grandfathers, and delighted that his diſintereſtedneſs was apparent, by his paſſion being avowed before her exalted expectations were generally known, ſhe liſtened with modeſt pleaſure to his proteſtations of eternal love, and referred him to Lord Glanville. This reference brought on an eclairciſſement, that diminiſhed their mutual delight. Selborne heard with emotion, that his miſtreſs was not only the heireſs of an earldom, but abſolutely in the diſpoſal of a perſon whoſe dark counſels no one could fathom; and Sophia felt the happineſs of being ſecure of the reciprocal affections of the man ſhe loved, embittered by anticipating the dangers to which he was going to be expoſed, and the certainty of an immediate ſeparation.

While her mind, depreſſed by ſorrow, could ſcarely obey the impulſe of female

delicacy

delicacy ſo far as to conceal its perturbation, her generous lover proceeded to vindicate the purity of his own attachment. "Sometimes," ſaid he, "I preſumed to hope that Sophy Herbert favoured me by a preference, which I cheriſhed as the deareſt bleſſing I could enjoy. Yet if, when in the eſtimation of the world my addreſſes might be ſuppoſed to confer diſtinction upon you, I then doubted the propriety of diſcloſing my paſſion till you were more fully acquainted with my temper and character; what muſt be my preſent diffidence? or how can I act, knowing your high expectations, ſo as to prove myſelf not wholly unworthy of you? Admiration muſt every where attend you. Your exalted rank, your birth, fortune, and perſonal and mental attractions, muſt raiſe a hoſt of competitors; and what can the abſent Selborne oppoſe to their pretenſions? I have nothing to urge but

but my ſincere and ardent attachment; and I will not expect you to acknowledge that to be a valid claim to your favour. I will be bound to you, Miſs Glanville, but you ſhall be free as air. If when I return to England I ſhould find you the wife of a more deſerving man, I will ſubmit; and, believe me, if he is as ſenſible of your worth as I am, and you are happy, I will *endeavour* not to be wretched."

This ſpeech had certainly a little caſt of the romantic. Sophia pardoned its extravagance. Even virtue and good ſenſe, when in love, are apt to walk upon tiptoes. I am ready to acknowledge, that there is ſomething very noble and elevated in the ideas naturally inſpired by a ſincere and worthy attachment; and I only wiſh lovers not to uſe too high ſtilts for fear of accidents. Miſs Glanville was herſelf employed in ruminating on the agreeable ſurpriſe which

Selborne would feel when he discovered Lord Glanville's determination in his favour; and while she resolved to suspend the full avowal of her own sentiments till the earl's sanction should permit her to be quite explicit, she determined, when they met after dinner, to soften the pain of separation, by intreating Selborne to be careful of his life in the hour of peril. She even doubted whether she might not add, "for my sake."

These agreeable reveries vanished, when, on rejoining the company after dinner, she perceived that Selborne was not in the circle; that Mr. Brudenell's countenance expressed anxiety and displeasure, while the earl's strained civility, half-suppressed anger and gloomy absence, denoted that his wayward mind was in a state of more than ordinary agitation. No reason was given for Selborne's absence, till one of the com-

pany expreſſed his regret at his being ſent on ſuch a dangerous expedition. The ſtorm that Lord Glanville had been collecting now ſeemed to burſt forth; and he proteſted that thoſe mercenary caterpillars wanted ſweeping from a land where they had too long fattened in idleneſs, waſting the vital ſtores of induſtry, and depriving a nation of its wealth. To this (in his uſual ſtyle of equivocation) he added, "As to Selborne in particular, he ſeems not *wholly* deſtitute of eſtimable qualities; but I have ſuch a natural deteſtation to all legalized butchers, that I am convinced no man can adopt that profeſſion without having a corrupted heart." Mr. Brudenell looked at Sophia during this declaration, obſerved that the heat of the room overcame her, offered his arm for a ſupport, and they immediately withdrew.

A pauſe

A pause of some moments ensued. Sophia fixed her expressive eyes on Mr. Brudenell's face. "Be composed, my love," said the venerable pastor; "*you* have nothing to condemn in your own behaviour. I depend upon your fortitude for support, for my own seems to desert me."

"Has Selborne seen Lord Glanville?"

"He has; and Lord Glanville is——"

"What?"——

"A deceiver!" exclaimed Mr. Brudenell, walking across the room with unusual agitation. "How finite are the views of erring man! How often are we called upon to lament the accomplishment of those desires which it has been the labour of our lives to promote! I thought it my duty to assert your claim to your birthright. I restored you to your father's family, as an ornament and

and a bleſſing. I beheld with tranſport the influence which your gentleneſs and tenderneſs acquired over Lord Glanville. With a delight that only parents can feel, I ſaw you engage the affections of a worthy man, whoſe birth and fortune were correſpondent to your own. I encouraged his addreſſes, I recommended him to your favour, in the ſingleneſs and integrity of my heart. I thus buſied myſelf to make you happy. O, my deareſt girl! muſt I now ſuppoſe that all my cares have only tended to render you the prey of regret and ſecret anguiſh? I perceive Lord Glanville determines that you ſhould raiſe the dignity of his houſe; and the generous Selborne is rejected with capricious cruelty, in hopes of an alliance more favourable to the earl's abſurd ambition."

"O Sir!" ſaid Sophia, with a look of heavenly complacence, "your fortitude has indeed deſerted you, or you would

would now recollect your own precepts; and forbear to complain that croſs incidents have fruſtrated your wiſeſt deſigns. I have heard you ſay, that it is folly as well as ingratitude to murmur at the inevitable deſtiny of our nature; and you have bid me never blame myſelf when my efforts failed of ſucceſs, provided my intentions were pure, and the means that I made uſe of allowable. I know that your firſt temporal wiſh was, to promote my happineſs; and Lord Glanville *ſhall not* make me wretched. I ſee the dilemma in which he means to involve me through the promiſe into which I was betrayed. He may ſeparate me from Lord Selborne; but he ſhall never make me the mercenary, perjured, hypocritical tool of his ambition or his avarice. My heart will retain that preference which he once ſeemed [illegible] courage; and I will endeavour ſo [illegible] that I may eſcape the pangs of [illegible] ſelf-

ſelf-reproach. Do not, dear ſir, accuſe yourſelf as the author of my perplexities. Theſe are my allotted trials, kindly ſent to correct my vanity and humble my preſumption. O, rather let your pious counſels inſtruct me how to improve my afflictions, ſo as to derive from them ſelf-knowledge and equanimity."

"You have anticipated all that I could ſay," returned Mr. Brudenell with a profound ſigh. "To thoſe who can thus *ſanctify* correction, adverſity is the greateſt bleſſing of indulgent Providence. Your compoſure has relieved my mind; and I will now inform you, that a violent altercation has taken place between Selborne and your grandfather. Elated by the engaging frankneſs of your manner, and incapable of ſoliciting the heireſs of the Glanville family without the concurrence of the head of that houſe, your lover informed the [illegible] his attachment to you, and intreate[illegible] not

approbation. I adviſed him to this ſtep. I love a manly, open conduct; and, though I had my doubts reſpecting Lord Glanville's intentions, what I had heard of his attachment to Selborne almoſt ſubdued them. I thought too, that an avowed engagement would relieve you from thoſe ſolicitations, to which you would otherwiſe be expoſed during your lover's abſence, eſpecially when your vaſt expectations are publicly owned. At Selborne's deſire I was preſent at the interview. It afforded a marked and ſtriking contraſt, between openneſs and integrity on one hand, and the moſt poliſhed duplicity on the other. I ſaw at once how it would end. The earl's low bows, ſtrained ſmiles, and exaggerated declarations of eſteem, convinced me that all his friendſhip would evaporate in verbal compliment. Selborne ſoon grew warm, and pleaded the encouragement which the earl had given to

to his viſits. In a moment your grandfather's ſmooth features grew contracted into the moſt ſtern frown. He talked of his own hoſpitality having been ungratefully abuſed, and of his ſuſpicious temper becoming the dupe of deceit. Selborne's indignation at this *perverſion* of language increaſed the keenneſs of the earl's invective. In vain did I attempt to ſoften them; they parted in ſevere diſpleaſure."

"And did Selborne leave the houſe in this ſtate of mind?" inquired Sophia.

"I followed him when he left the room," continued Mr. Brudenell, "to aſſure him of my eſteem." "Lord Glanville's taunts," ſaid he, "have ſtruck me to the ſoul. It does not become me to boaſt of merit; but perhaps even he ſhall one day be compelled to own that I am not unworthy of *his* alliance. Sophia is above all praiſe, and beyond all deſert. I rejoice that I have not

not fettered her generous nature by any poſitive engagement. She is free, Mr. Brudenell; do you bear witneſs that I acknowledge her entire liberty." I preſume not on her favour, I will ſcarcely allow myſelf to hope that I have an intereſt in her heart, but I go determined to deſerve her."

"And did you promiſe nothing for me?" ſaid Miſs Glanville.

"I told him," reſumed Mr. Brudenell, "that though you had no romantic enthuſiaſm in your diſpoſition, you were as remarkable for the *conſtancy* of your attachments as for the cautious judgment with which you formed them."

"Did you ſay no more?" returned the young lady, while her cheek 'glowed celeſtial roſy red, love's proper hue:' "Surely, ſir, to a man ſo diffident, ſo diſintereſted, placed in circumſtances ſo very trying, you might have ſaid rather more."

"I am

"I am cautious," returned Mr. Brudenell, "not to increaſe the difficulties of your ſituation. You know not the threats which Lord Glanville may employ to intimidate you into compliance with his plans. Propoſals may be made to you abſolutely unexceptionable; and time and abſence may weaken Selborne's influence in your heart. I ſee that you are piqued at this ſuggeſtion; but I have known the world long; and it is not from the quietude of my own paſſions, but from general conſiderations on the human character, that I judge, when I ſay that I have ſeen minds as delicate and as generous as your own, gradually weaned from a firſt attachment. I have alſo known people of moſt inviolable integrity unite themſelves, in conſequence of an early engagement, to a perſon for whom their heart had ceaſed to feel any preference, and thus become unhappy for the remainder of their lives.

Though

Though the maxims which experience has imprinted upon my mind are abſolutely oppoſite to the dictates of romantic love, I am ſo fully ſenſible of the weakneſs of my fellow-creatures, that I am averſe to every promiſe, contract, or ſupererogatory obligation, which tends to increaſe our difficulties, and to ſtraiten the ſtraight path of *poſitive* duty. I revere Lord Selborne's liberality in leaving you abſolutely free. I commend his nice ſenſe of duty in forbearing to preſs another interview, or even from ſending you a farewell epiſtle after his altercation with the parent on whom you depend. The man who can thus generouſly ſcorn to betray unſuſpecting tenderneſs into a clandeſtine engagement, is far more deſerving of confidence and eſteem than the ſelfiſh ſolicitor who makes his miſtreſs *really* that object of pity which he artfully affects to be. Your lover, my child, has an exalted

exalted idea of you ; and I am convinced that your confummate prudence will fhew him you deferve it."

N. B. I requeft that all my matronly friends will watch their daughters during the perufal of the laft paragraph ; as I am afraid fome maternal interpofition will be neceffary to preferve my heretical opinions on the divinity and immutability of love from the flames.

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